

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for an Action Review on Monday, April 8, 2019 at 5:03 p.m. in Room 267 of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Vi Lyles presiding. Councilmembers present were Dimple Ajmera, Larken Egleston, Julie Eiselt, LaWana Mayfield, Mat Newton, and Greg Phipps.

**ABSENT:** Councilmember Tariq Bokhari

**ABSENT UNTIL NOTED:** Councilmembers Ed Driggs, Justin Harlow, James Mitchell and Braxton Winston, II.

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### **ITEM NO. 1: Mayor and Council Consent Questions**

**Marie Harris, Strategy and Budget** said Item No. 10 is a public hearing on the Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Action Plan for Housing and Community Development; there are some numbers in the explanation that are being updated and you will have an updated- versions of that at your seat at the dais. They are up; they are not down so there is slightly more than that in the explanation point.

**Mayor Lyles** said staff has pulled Item No. 24 so Item No. 24 will not be on our agenda tonight.

**Councilmember Mayfield** said I would like to pull Item No. 23 for a separate vote.

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### **ITEM NO. 2: AGENDA REVIEW**

**Mayor Lyles** said we are going to hear from Charlotte Center City Partners and University City Partners; we are going to defer the Economic Development and Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority Update and Strategy to another meeting. We will have a closed session as well.

**Councilmember Driggs arrived at 5:05 p.m.**

**Councilmember Winston arrived at 5:07 p.m.**

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### **ITEM NO. 3: CHARLOTTE CENTER CITY PARTNERS**

**Phil Reiger, Budget Director** said I have the privilege of introducing two of our important partners in the City, just want to give some context to a backdrop. Annually State Statute requires that our contractors that provide Municipal Service Districts services have to give an annual report to City Council and so that is what we are doing tonight. Those two partners are Charlotte Center City Partners and University City Partners. Tonight, Michael Smith, President and CEO of Charlotte Center City Partners will give an annual report specifically for Districts 1 through 4, and Darlene Heater, Executive Director of University City Partners will give the report for District 5. Darlene is working her way through security right now, and she will come in but Michael Smith is scheduled to go first; so, I will invite Michael to come to the podium, and we will get him rolling.

**Michael Smith, Charlotte Center City Partners** said it is good to be back with you; it is my pleasure to share with you some incredible results achieved through this great public/private partnership. Together, we are building one of the great downtowns of the world. We've had 41-years of mission building work with this organization, thanks to some incredible founders like Hugh McColl and Harvey Gantt, Ed Crutchfield, Bill Lee, John Belk and the like. We aspire to create a Center City that serves as the foundation for a thriving region, a Center City that is committed to economic mobility and affordability and those values of inclusion and equity. These values shape our budget and our program of work each year, so we are organized as a 501(c)4 and 501(c)3 non-profit organizations and our mission is to drive economic, social, cultural development of the Center City. Our focus is on growing jobs and investment, while recruiting and retaining

the best talent. We lead with planning and research, story-telling, recruiting, marketing and communications, programs and events, community building and place making, kind of that basket of activities.

To give you a sense of the Districts that we serve, MSD 1 is the entirety of uptown; MSD 2 is the secondary business district; MSD 3 is the primary business district; Tryon Street over to College Street and Trade Street and then the South End is MSD 4. MSC 2 also includes Mid-Town and CPCC. In order to put together our program of work and our budget, we seek a lot of input from a lot of partners. We engage stakeholders in the budget process; we incorporate input from the 2020 Vision Plan, from the South End Vision Plan, the North Tryon Plan. Our directors of neighborhoods attend the neighborhood association meetings and participate with their Boards of Directors. We conduct research and surveys and focus groups; we employ communications tools and we rely on the expert counsel of our Advisory Committees for the Planning and Development Committee and the South End Committee. All this comes together and informs our Board who then vets the program of work which informs a budget.

Just to give you a quick snapshot of where we are in our Center City; we continue to enjoy the extra endings of this incredible velocity in this economic cycle. All this growth creates the infrastructure for opportunity. We are committed to job growth through economic development, jobs are the foundation of any great downtown and it is enabled through office space. Center City Partners serves as the lead recruiter for the Center City and our teams works seamlessly with economic development partners at the City, the County, the State and the Alliance as well as all the brokers and the private sector folks who participate in economic development. It has been an incredible year as you are all aware; it seems like ribbon cutting after ribbon cutting with the likes of Honeywell and Avid Exchange and this new merger between Sun Trust and BB&T. We are on track to have our most prolific decade of office development. If what is announced and under construction is built it will be 7.2 million square feet of new office. This equates to enough space for another 30,500 employees. That is why it matters; it all connects back to the people, the infrastructure for opportunity, and that is not even mentioning the construction jobs, the supply chain jobs around the hospitality jobs about building these seven million square feet. In fact, our downtown is the fourth busiest for construction in the nation, only behind New York, Chicago and Seattle. Pretty good company for us as we change leagues. Much of this growth represents new capital, institutional money coming into our community and building new tax base. From a planning and development standpoint, we've fulfilled much of the vision and tactics of the 2020 Plan, and we are planning and working with your Planning Department to begin the process for the 2040 Center City Vision Plan, working in close coordination with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

We lead with data to compel investors and economic development prospects. We just published in January our ninth State of the Center City Report, which provides a toolkit for our economic development partners to tell the story of the Center City holistically. There are other plans, the North Tryon Vision Plan which you all adopted, which contemplates 50-blocks inside of uptown. Cathy Bessant is Chairing the Implementation Committee for us of that Plan; we are making great progress. Leanora recently broke ground on a mixed-use project at the Ninth Street Station; we raised some private money to introduce some new programming into the North Tryon area, things like the Uptown Flea. Alive after Five is moving there. We even put up a Ferris wheel for a while in the fall just trying to get people used to coming back to that area of North Tryon which has so many parking lots but we think is going to be this incredible TOD neighborhood shortly. We also have a retail initiative; we recently opened planned or have under construction a million square feet of new retail in the Center City, and if built, that is space for a hundred new businesses. From a neighborhood standpoint we've got directors of uptown and South End, great urban centers are expressed through their neighborhoods and it is important to remember. There are 32,000 residents in the Center City now. We will build more housing in this decade than the last three combined. There are over 7,800 units that are either under construction or planned, and if those are built, that will be another 17,500 residents in the Center City.

From an affordability standpoint, believe it or not, our Center City is relatively affordable when compared to our competitive set, but relative affordability is not our goal. We have about 1,100 units that are subsidized affordable housing, and we are fully committed to a Center City that grows our supply of affordable housing. You will see that commitment reflected in our program of work, in the 2040 Plan and there is a great example of it being planned out in the Seventh and Tryon Project. The South End Vision Plan was also adopted, a great partnership with the Planning Department, raising the bar for development standards through this community driven vision for the next 20-years.

From an event standpoint, our Center City is the hub of regional hospitality. We have 18 million visitors to it for non-work purposes, for hospitality each year. This is an important part of our local economy. We found that rev par which is hotels occupancy and average daily rate has gone up in the Center City each year for the last nine-years, and because of that the market has responded. We are on pace to have our best decade ever adding new properties like the Grand Bohemian, the J. W. Marriott, the Intercontinental Hotel. That Intercontinental Hotel will be the tallest hotel in the Carolinas when it is completed. If what is planned is built it will be 7,900 rooms in our Center City, and the rooms that are being built will give us space for an additional 800,000 overnight guests per year. You are feeling it changing in our City.

We also did some survey work last year and found that 95% of Mecklenburg County residents visited the Center City at least once last year for non-work purposes. We continue our programming with a partnership we've really enjoyed with the City on CLT 250. We are approaching the culmination of that with Charlotte Shout in May; we love the partnership on the NBA All-Star Game. I hope you all were so proud of what you enabled through that event. The Novant Health Thanksgiving Day Parade, we are proud to continue to produce. Art and Soul of South End, Holidays in the City, CLT New Year's Eve and then we run the Tryon Street Vendor Program and the food trucks across the Center City.

From the transit standpoint we love working with the City, with CATS and with your Economic Development Group on the Gateway Station, Charlotte B-cycle is our mission based docked system. We are working with C-DOT on adding nearly 150 ESX bikes and 10 new stations across the network, thanks to a new federal grant and a bunch of private money that we raised to match it. The Rail Trail Plan is moving nicely with design and vision for that pedestrian bridge to cross I-277. Thank you to the City for the leadership that you guys took in helping fund that and the partners we were able to bring to the table. This year we've been able to secure about \$1.8 million of private money to help us take that project, and we are enjoying working with Mike Davis in Engineering.

Additionally, we raised \$100,000 a year for the next five-years to bring programming to the South End on the Rail Trail. Uptown Connects is also a great project; we are enjoying working with C-DOT connecting the greenways. From a Special Initiatives standpoint, the Ambassador Program was launched, thanks to our partnership so thank you for that support. Our contractor has hired 14 ambassadors, well paid with good benefits, they are trained, they are out working on the streets. They are assets for us on hospitality but also, they are our first responders to connect people in crisis with the services they need. We had tremendous success at the Thanksgiving Day Parade and throughout the All-Star Weekend. The Seventh Street Public Market is something we incubated and we operate with private money. We are in what we are calling Market 3.0. Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Atrium Health and Bank of America have all renewed their support as we enter year seven. We've incubated 35 businesses and there are a million annual visitors. Music Everywhere is in full stride. This is an economic development initiative for the arts community. We've spent the last 12-months convening and surveying the music community; we hired a consultant to draft a Charlotte Music Action Plan. Special thanks to Councilmember Egleston and Bokhari for all the support and interest in this plan. Julie has been out, as many of you guys have been out and been a part of this; thank you, we are looking forward to the next step.

Housing First Charlotte Mecklenburg is something we launched five-years ago forming a collaboration of public sector and businesses. We've now housed 814 chronically

homeless, but there are over 400 still living in our streets; so, a lot of more work to do there. Real Change is our initiative around aggressive panhandling and we enjoy our partnership with Envision Charlotte.

To our budget, this is FY19; so, this is the year that we are in now. This is a snapshot; some of the stand out things this year were the launching of the Ambassador Program, the private money that we went out and raised. We raised almost \$2 million to support the CLT 250 Celebration. That is all one-time money and then we raised some private money so that we can get to the federal money for Charlotte B-cycle.

Then looking ahead to the budget that has been recommended by our Executive Committee, we are still working through the process of taking it to our Board in early May. This is a summary of the recommendations. You will notice that MSD revenue is 63% of total revenue; personnel expense is 32% of expenses, and the piece that I would draw your attention to in this is this budget recommends that we increase the revenue of this organization as a part of a five-year plan that was adopted by our Board and I wanted to share a little bit of the information behind that. The 2012 property tax revaluation had a heightened impact on the commercial properties within our community, and it reduced our annual revenue by 15% in FY16, that is when it hit us and it required us refunding to the City \$1.1 million of MSD funds. The Board adopted a five-year strategic plan from FY16 to FY20 to maintain critical services for our stakeholders by utilizing our reserve; so, we cut our services. We cut back but we had to maintain a certain amount; so, what we did we did deficit spending with the plan that when we did the revaluation in FY20 that at that point we would seek to return the Center City budget to structural balance in order to cease deficit spending to restore valuable services and to restore the reserve. Our objective for the increased funding is multifaceted; it is obviously to restore the balanced budget and also to restore some of the services that were cut following the property tax revaluation, to restore our reserve to 25% of the operating budget within three to five-years and to provide services commensurate with the growth of the Center City, additional free events and programming, expanded research and planning and to fund and project manage the 2040 Center City Vision Plan and new marketing for uptown and South End.

**Councilmember Winston** said I know the County is considering putting a new tax on a referendum this fall to support cultural institutions and part of it might be as well around affordable housing, but knowing that a lot of cultural institutions do exist within the area of Charlotte Center City Partners, what if any do you see the role of expanding or contracting of a partnership in supporting our cultural institutions?

Mr. Smith said that are constraints within the enabling legislation about what these funds are to be used for. The role that we've played with cultural institutions is marketing, convening, organizing, not funding operations. That has not been something that has ever been a part of our mission. If that is something that there would be interest in it is something we would have to evaluate and talk about.

**Councilmember Driggs** said I'm not sure if you answered this, and I just didn't quite get it, but the current revaluation estimates that commercial properties will be up by about 70%. Your MSD revenue is a property tax, is that right?

Mr. Smith said yes, it is a millage that applies to property owners in uptown, mid-town and South End.

Mr. Driggs said so, from what you were talking about replenishing reserves you would have a kind of revenue neutral calculation on the millage based on the reevaluation. Are you suggesting you may not go all the way down to that number?

Mr. Smith said the Board's suggested approach was to reduce the millage to approach revenue neutral but to not go all the way to revenue neutral in order to restore the balanced budget and to be able to over the next three to five-years restore the reserve that we've used during the last four-years.



Mr. Driggs said in general is that something that your Board decides or your members or do we have responsibility for that decision?

Mr. Smith said the way we've handled it in the past it has come as a recommendation from our Board of Directors, but in the end, it is your vote.

Mr. Driggs said okay, I just wanted to be clear on the decision we have to make.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said what was the deficit from previous years taken out from reserves?

Mr. Smith said from the reserves we wrote a check back to the City over the course of three years for \$1.1 million. One year it was towards \$800,000, and the other two were smaller, and we have an agreement with the City each year that we are going to forecast how much revenue is created by the millage by MSDs, and if it is too low then there is a balance due from the City to us each year. If it is inadequate then we have to write a check back, so that was part of what came out of reserve and then the amount of reserve that we used each year was different each year across those four-years. I think it totaled towards a million dollars that we utilized.

Ms. Ajmera said in terms of the reserves that were used to fill in for the deficit; I know for the City we have some sort of guidelines around this is the percentage of reserves that we have to keep. How are we doing in terms of the Center City budget if you are taking it out of reserves?

**Councilmember Mitchell arrived at 5:27 p.m.**

Mr. Smith said our contractual requirement is to keep eight percent of the MSD in reserve, and we are well north of that. We have \$800,000 in reserve right now, but we really feel more comfortable having at least three or four months, so that is the best practice now, between 25% and one-third in reserve.

Ms. Ajmera said so we are still above the guidelines.

Mr. Smith said we are above our contractual guidelines but we are below the target of 25% to 33%.

Ms. Ajmera said in terms of the tax rate what you are saying is that we would have to keep that deficit in mind as we set the tax rate for the special tax for folks living in Center City.

Mr. Smith said anybody who owns property in one of these four Districts pays City and County tax and then the millage for MSDs one through four and the recommendation from our Board is that we look at what revenue neutral is but we increase the amount that is taken in again, to restore that structural balance.

Ms. Ajmera said I would like to know whatever the new rate that your Board came up with, is that growth rate, or is it higher than the growth rate with the neutral rate being the baseline?

Mr. Smith said we will work with the Budget Department here to understand what revenue neutral is, and we will seek to have a millage that allows for a certain amount of revenue.

**Councilmember Harlow arrived at 5:28 p.m.**

**Councilmember Mayfield** said Mr. Smith; first I want to say thank you for bringing us a very detailed presentation. You noted that we have around 1,100 units of diverse housing and what I would like to know is are we tracking workforce and/or diverse price point housing specifically in the uptown area, not just South End and some of the other MSDs but specifically in uptown?

Mr. Smith said we definitely will; the almost 1,100 units are subsidized units. I think they are mostly Charlotte Housing Authority.

Ms. Mayfield said but we have not actually traced specifically for uptown? That is something that we will look at in the future?

Mr. Smith said gladly.

Ms. Mayfield said you mentioned small business growth that is happening in the uptown area; has your team had conversations specifically on identifying and creating opportunity for minority owned small businesses specifically in uptown? Specifically, black and Latino and Asian small businesses in uptown.

Mr. Smith said our best opportunity to do that is at the Seventh Street Public Market and that is something that is a priority. Every time we are evaluating new tenants coming in, it is what kind of a cultural and diverse mix are we having in there that is reflective of the whole community, and it is a great way for us to incubate small businesses, because we are taking businesses into that market that are not credit tenants and would struggle with getting traditional leases, but thanks to the sponsorship partners that we have we are able to bring them in and incubate them and bring some of the partners that they need so they can learn. Many of them have now gone out and opened multiple locations. It has been a great seven-years.

Ms. Mayfield said it is interesting that you would mention Seventh Street, because that was my last question but since you pulled it in; out of currently 11 businesses that are in Seventh Street Market there are no black owned businesses according to the website.

Mr. Smith said that is not accurate.

Ms. Mayfield said so, there is clearly a movement, not only across the nation, but across the City, you have black businesses of Charlotte and other groups but you have people that will go and look to see okay, who is the business owned by. I know that at least one of my colleagues have had conversations regarding economic development where it was mentioned that it was difficult for some minority businesses to get access to Seventh Street, so I'm glad to hear that you said there is a commitment to ensuring that we do have diversity in the Seventh Street Market, because again, just doing a search and looking at each of the vendors on the website for Seventh Street Public Market, it will be very difficult to identify specifically, because we have great representation regarding male and female so there is great gender representation, but ethnicity representation there is not as much diversity.

Mr. Smith said there is at least two African American owned and maybe even more. I'll be glad to bring you the data.

Ms. Mayfield said they would just update it on the site, because that would just be good information, but I'm glad to hear you say that is a focus.

Mr. Smith said if you have not been to the Yoke yet please come out.

Ms. Mayfield said that is brand-new. The other question I have you specifically mentioned conversation on supporting local community events through marketing and other things. I want to know, and this is something you can send to us just for all of Council to know, this past week-end in uptown at Spirit Square was the African American Festival, which was a really great event, but what I was wondering is how does Center City Partners partner with local groups? We do a lot of work of course with the MLK Committee, which I am extremely proud of as well as a lot of work with the Thanksgiving Day Parade and other big events in uptown, but it would be helpful to know in this budget if there is a marketing arm specifically for smaller events that help to diversity and build out our cultural offerings specifically in uptown. You mentioned that you have been able to aggressively handle panhandling. It would be really helpful to know how you were able to do that.

Mr. Smith said we have an initiative that is called Real Change, and it is a partnership with health and human service organizations: the United Way, CMPD Men's Shelter, Doves Nest, the Urb, really a good group, and what we've tried to do is to help utilize- It is a speaker series where some of those leaders like Tony Marciano goes out and talks to groups about how we can best support and help and connect these folks with the services that they need. These guys are the experts; we are not, but we are also utilizing the Ambassador Program to only when it is aggressive panhandling, the illegal panhandling, and trying to then intercede and connect them with the services that they need.

Ms. Ajmera said what is the percentage of commercial and residential within the Center City Tax District? I would think probably more commercial, but is there any residential that we should be considering as well?

Mr. Smith said your question is what is the mix of commercial and residential within the District?

Ms. Ajmera said yes.

Mr. Smith said are you asking that in regard to square feet?

Ms. Ajmera said no, I guess I'm asking as we are looking at the tax rate.

Mr. Smith said what we have found over time is the residential portion of paying into the Municipal Service District was about 14%, but with the amount of office that is being built that percentage is going down and the original design of the Municipal Service Districts intentionally created a smaller rate for MSD 1 which is all of uptown and then a higher millage for MSDs 2 and 3, which are more focused on the primary business district and the secondary business district. Each time it was intentionally focused on the commercial side covering more of the services that we fulfill.

Ms. Ajmera said has your Board made a recommendation about the millage; would that impact heavily commercial versus residential?

Mr. Smith said the suggestion was that we reduce all four millages; it is not set to a millage rate right now is the short answer. I really do want to sit down with Phil and understand what revenue neutral is and then be able to create those additional resources to maintain the services that our partners are accustomed to receiving.

**Mayor Lyles** said thank you for the report. In the past what we've asked you to do is show evidence of willingness and wanting to pay those taxes. So, this is one of those Districts where we've always had really great participation setting that millage, and your Board I'm sure is representative of a lot of that. I think as in the past we need to hear from the people in the community to say that they understand whatever the rate. We will have the revenue neutral rate of course, but if we are going to go above revenue neutral we will need to have documented support from the people that are paying that bill and that goes towards your program I'm sure but which programs do they see the value in and making sure those are covered. I know that we require an eight percent reserve and I know that 25% generally cash on hand but is the reserve necessary at that level. or is it cash on hand that 25%? Just the difference and I know we can talk about what standard to use for that. You will be with our Budget staff to work through this with the Manager, but the information we will need will be the neutral, your recommended rate and documentation of the willingness of the District to support that.

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#### **ITEM NO. 4: UNIVERSITY CITY PARTNERS**

**Phil Reiger, Strategy and Budget** introduced Darlene Heater, Executive Director of University City Partners.

**Darlene Heater, University City Partners** University City Partners manages MSD-5, which is a Municipal Service District that was created in 2003. The mission of University City Partners is to build and sustain the economic vitality of University City, and we do that by recruiting and expanding businesses and growing investments, building our vision, which means implementing our City's area plans and shaping growth and development. We also work really hard to enhance the University; it is one of our major economic development engines. We protect and grow our natural assets and we also work really hard to maintain a safe City. University City MSD-5 is eight miles from Center City, and the MSD is five square miles; that is a very large MSD, and if you look at it, to give you some context you can see Center City or uptown highlighted in purple and what you see in green that is heart shaped at the top right-hand part of the screen is the University City MSD, and it does include UNC-Charlotte. We are real excited to say for the first time since I've made this presentation that we are now connected by LYNX light rail to Center City.

A little bit about University City, it is Charlotte's second largest employment center and it has 85,000 workers and 11 million square feet of office space. By comparison sake, just to give you some context for that number, Ballantyne has six million square feet of office space, so almost twice the size of Ballantyne. We are home to a collection of diverse neighborhoods for 170,000 residents and 30,000 students. We are adding more residents every day, but these residents will be living in a new urban context as we develop more multifamily and townhomes in University City. As I mentioned, we are home to the economic development engine that is UNC-Charlotte. Every year UNC-Charlotte graduates 7,000 students and 85% of them stay in Charlotte and participate in our workforce.

Light rail is transforming University City both through mobility and through property development. The BLE is also responsible for adding a lot of sidewalks in University City; so, we are starting to see a lot more pedestrians both on Tryon Street as well as at each of our transit stations. That has been a very exciting happening for us. Last year, what is our current fiscal year, our MSD invested \$1.58 million in the District. We requested \$752,000 of MSD funding from the City of Charlotte; we invested \$180,000 through sponsorships and contributions, and that was largely to fund a transportation study for our arterial roads, those roads that surround the University, and I call them road; they are really arterial thoroughfares. We also pulled money from our capital reserve to fund the first phase of Way Finding Signs that we plan on installing in University City. We moved into new office space, which puts us closer to the University and our many interns that we have and this year we launched a Clean Community Litter Removal Program that I will talk about in just a few minutes.

We also have like Center City Partners, we have a 501(c)3; this was created so that we could take contributions for events. Last year, we raised and contributed almost \$100,000 to support our community events. We took this money and invested the revenue as you can see according to this chart. We invest about 20% just in running the business, turning the lights on, employing interns, we do employ them. We don't make them volunteer, and the majority of the money was spent in planning and development. As you can imagine a sub-market that is quickly growing like University City is but then also in marketing events because we are at a point in our time where we really need to work on convening community and starting to build a resilient and inclusive community. So, 37% of our revenue was invested in marketing and events.

In FY19, the fiscal year we are currently in, we've seen really exciting advancement in economic development. I can tell you for the first time in the sub-markets history, University City is enjoying a 7.1% vacancy rate. eahat is uptown?

**Mayor Lyles** said 6.1%

Ms. Heater said when I started this job six-years ago the vacancy rate was hovering around 32%.



Mayor Lyles said you can really tell the difference when you come down Harris Boulevard, that little back part where I'm not sure how you move around before you cross over Highway 29; all the office space is full.

Ms. Heater said because of this growth we also enjoy the busiest intersection in the State of North Carolina which is at Harris Boulevard and North Tryon Street, but one thing that we are really excited about is of the 7.1% that is still on the market that is majorly housed in three vacant buildings; so, normally when you have this type of vacancy rate you have pieces and parts in a lot of different buildings. That makes us very playable for a lot of the big recruitment efforts that would come through the State, the City or the County. So, we have three buildings that total about 600,00 square feet of space, pretty exciting for us. We are in a very active development stage so, as a result of light rail we now have 39 parcels that we are tracking better in some stage of activity. These are parcels that have not yet hit the rezoning queue so 39 parcels that have inquiries or perspective developments on them. We have seen significant organic business growth this past year with the announcement of [inaudible] expanding by 500 jobs; Allstate securing space for the rest of their jobs that they committed to Charlotte and Wells Fargo expanding pretty significantly in University City; they are up to almost 13,000 employees in University City. They are our largest employer.

We are really pleased that we will soon have a new hotel and conference center at UNC-Charlotte, and we were very active in our support and advocacy for that realization. As I mentioned, this year our Board elected to pivot and delay our investment in Way Finding Signage until this summer, because we had come to the realization that we had hit a tipping point with regard to litter. Councilmember Phipps' telephone rings off the hook and my telephone rings off the hook, and it is businesses and residents and visitors complaining about it. So, in January our Board opted to send out an RFP and request some proposals from different companies that could provide this service. On March 1, 2019, we launched a pilot program for North Tryon Corridor and University City Boulevard, and I will tell you what a difference. I drove it today just to make sure I wasn't going to lie when I was standing in front of you, but the right-of-way; I saw two pieces of litter on North Tryon Street and zero shopping carts. It has been kind of one of our nuisance detractors on those major arterials; we have some affordable housing and hotels and those folks don't have any way to get five bags of groceries back to their hotel so they push those carts, and they leave them in the street. The City of Charlotte Solid Waste works with this team to pick up any of the large debris like shopping carts and pallets and the crazy stuff that they pull out of the lakes and out of the roadway.

We thought it would take about 30-days to restore it, to actually get down in the weeds and clean up all the litter and we are 30-days through it, and I'm pleased to say today that when I drove through it there was almost no litter with the MSD on North Tryon Street and University City Boulevard. I tell Mr. Phipps that this is our gift to him as he closes out his term, but we are not relying on just this program alone, we are also working pretty aggressively to get more businesses to adopt City streets through the Adopt-A-Street Program. We have some boy scouts that are regularly cleaning up our greenways, and we have some resident groups that are actually going out and cleaning up along the I-485 round-a-bouts but also on our greenways. So, we recognize that it is going to take a community effort to maintain the place that we enjoy living, working and playing in, but we should all put our shoulder to that stone.

In Planning and Development, this year we launched an initiative to define the vision for University City. This initiative was fully funded by University City Partners and was pulled from our reserve account. This project should be wrapping up by the beginning of summer. We are real excited about it, and what it is going to help us do is more clearly articulate for those key areas in University City, how we envision them being developed, so not just dictate the land use, but what will the built form look like? What type of amenities do we want to see on the streets for our residents; what types of parks should we envision for these areas and then what the building should look like? One of our challenges is that when you declare a land use we have a service station that came into one of our future kind of urban neighborhoods and gas stations are considered retail. So, we didn't have anything with teeth that we could stand up in front of this developer and

say we don't want this, this doesn't fit with the use or the vision of this area. We worked in partnership with Stantec; right now, they are finalizing their document, and we are real excited to share that with you, and I'm sure you will be seeing a lot of references to it in upcoming rezoning cases.

We've also been working hard to find a new site for our Library. The University City Library is the busiest in the system, second busiest by transaction. Its land lease is up and we've got a couple years to find a new location for it so, we drew it as part of the J. W. Clay Master Plan and now we are executing that Plan. We've got a new developer who has agreed to spec a site for the new Library and God willing and County willing we will get that Library moved in time. We've also stepped up our advocacy on parks; you've heard me mention before that University City is park poor; we have zero parks in University City. We've been working really hard with our community to get their voice out and make that need be heard. As I mentioned to you, we have funded a transportation study in partnership with C-DOT, NC-DOT, UNC-Charlotte, and University City Partners. Again, this was money that was pulled from our reserves to fund this study. We have created the scope; we have sent off the RFPs and we have contracted with a firm. We are waiting for NC-DOT to release their funding for us to begin this study. What this study will do is tell us how our major arterials, University City Boulevard, Harris Boulevard, Mallard Creek Church Road should act. All three of those streets encompass the University, and we are very worried about the growth of those streets and how it may create a mote around our University. We've also been working very hard to make student living quarters available within a walking distance of the University and widening all those streets around the University would make that improbably that the students would be able to walk.

We are real excited this year to work with CMPD on identifying a new site and designing a new building. We are now working with them on selecting an artist and the public art for the new facility, and I believe it will be breaking ground before this fall. I think the contracts are being let; it is in process I know. As I mentioned, we are executing a J. W. Clay Station Plan; this was a plan that we funded two-years ago. We now have a property that has been transacted, and we have a new developer who is very interested in helping us fulfill the vision of that plan. You will be hearing from them I think at your next Zoning Meeting for a vote on that. We are supportive of that; we've worked really hard and rally long to get everything that is important for the future growth of University City included in that rezoning. We've made major advancements in the University Research Park Area Plan; this is a plan that was developed in 2010 by the City of Charlotte and University City Partners. So, as you can see it is about 10-years old, and we are real excited that this year we have succeeded in adding a mix of uses inside the Research Park which is really important to keep that viable. That is where our largest employment is located and we will be adding for sale townhomes, about 225 I think from Mattamy, some new multifamily from Crescent and then we have a rezoning in for two retail developments that will be on the edge of the Research Park. So, really working at addressing some of the implementation steps in the University City Research Park Area Plan. We've also been working on the University Station Entertainment District; you all just approved the amendment to the Top Golf rezoning, and I was with a developer on Friday and he said they believe that they will be breaking ground within the next week or two. So, Top Golf will anchor that Entertainment District.

As I mentioned we worked on Way Finding Signs this year; our goal was to invest in seven to 10 signs this year because of the work that we needed to do around litter and making sure that I could sell the place without bringing my investors to a right-of-way that looked like a third world country. We opted to delay the investment until this summer so you will see that accounted for in our budget. But, we have completed the design and we know where all the locations are going to be. In total we will have about 35 Way Finding Signs and these will be vehicular Way Finding Signs.

In marketing and communication, we are going through some pretty heavy lifting on our Brand update; what we realized is that the folks who know University City don't know University City today. It is a very different place today than it was five-years ago, than it was two-years ago. So, we want to make sure that we are talking about University, not just for the University City that we are today but what we aspire to be. We also produce

three community events, the University City Wine Fest which is a fund raiser for both the Sugar Creek Library and the University City Library. I wrote a check from that event last year for \$10,000 to each one of those Libraries to support programming in our communities. We produced a healthy UCity Race Series which is a series of 5-K and 8-K in University City. I think we are up to nine as part of that series and the Charlotte Kid's Fest which is a partnership between University City Partners and the University. Last year we hosted 7,000 children and their big parents. Lastly, in marketing and communications we have launched a new community safety collaborative so, one of the realizations of our board and it has been something we've been chewing on for quite some time; this perception of University City as not being a safe community. So, our Board, in addition to working on the litter piece, which is the visual representation, visual perception of how someone perceives University City we also launched a Community Safety Collaborative and this is in partnership with CMPD, University City Partners and UNC-Charlotte.

We meet once a month with our Captain and we map all of our crime by heat maps, we look at what our problems are, what type of crime is happening there but before we did that we actually did a very deep dive on the crime trends in University City, so, not only looking at the heat maps of today but trending back one year. Then we look at University City in the context of other Districts to see if there were crimes that were happening that was very specific to University City that may not be represented or that type of activity in other communities. We were astounded at what we learned. What we learned is that University City is in the top three of the safest communities in Charlotte. Isn't that amazing? You wouldn't know that based on what the media depicts. What we also learned is that University City is the number one TV market for our media. So, this is all work that is ongoing; we meet once a month with CMPD. We take a very collaborative approach that if there are interventions that the University can make or that University City Partners can make in partnership with CMPD to help address a lot of the nuisance crime that we see in University City that is what we accomplish through this collaborative.

As Michael mentioned, we are very similar in our approach as to how we collect feedback from our community, and I will tell you of all of these things engaging our Board and our Committees we do a lot of public presentations and we attend a lot of neighborhood meetings and I will say that outside of our Newsletter that is probably the best place where we get feedback from our community. Our Newsletter goes out twice a month and we usually get one or two a week response from those.

Our FY20 budget needs, our request is for \$1.081 million from the City of Charlotte. We will raise \$31,000 in sponsorships and contributions. Our 501(c)3 will target to raise at least \$100,000 for our community events and then we will be pulling \$75,000 from our reserves to refund those Way Finding Signs that I mentioned that we delayed.

Our priorities for this year; we have four main priorities and then some new initiatives; are creating strong centers. We're rebuilding University City; we've got to get the Centers right first, so that is parks and libraries as anchors, a mix of housing, making sure that we are investing in the public realm and as I mentioned the Way Finding Signs, seven to 10 signs, will be our investment this year and then convening the community through both placemaking event we produce but also events we support. We sponsor and/or help with producing the Comino Centers Back to School Fair, the Communities Race to Educate, which raises scholarship money for about eight to 10 Vance High School Seniors, there are several others. We brought the Arts and Science Council to University City so that we could have a connect with Culture Day so we sponsored that and help produce that at the Comino Center. Enabling transportation that aligns with our vision, that goes back to the thoroughfares and should we have big streets or should we have a great urban community; expanding trails and multi-use trails, bike lanes, sidewalks, rethinking our interchanges, increasing access to the Research Park. This is a big, big item for us, because that big employment center as we add employees we've got to make sure that we maintain access so that people can get to and from the workplace. We are doing a lot of heavy lifting on that with C-DOT, so we thank you for your partnership. Then improving our arterials.



As I mentioned sustaining and growing business, we work really closely with the commercial real estate industry on keeping properties in front of them, talking to them about the value proposition for University City and why a certain business could grow or should locate there. We work to inform our facilitate redevelopment; you all hear from me a lot on that. Retaining and growing and recruiting businesses and lastly executing clean streets, clean community which is in the pilot program that I mentioned to you around litter collection. Strengthening safe communities; our plan is to continue with the collaborative; we are going to work to advocate and secure adequate resources. Our CMPD Precinct is down 17 officers. That is not 17 that we need; that is how many we are supposed to have that we don't have; so, when you think about a community that has a 30,000 student University, 170,000 residents and 85,000 workers you really start to feel that pinch. Lastly, encouraging and looking for ways we can use technology to make us more efficient. Our new initiatives are the safety collaborative, our work around the brand assessment and value proposition, the Way Finding Signs that we plan to install, clean streets, clean community and then communicating very intentionally once we come out of our brand study with how we want people to recognize University City and think about University City, and we are working on some scenario planning for transportation in partnership with the City of Charlotte and UNC-Charlotte's School of Informatics in combination with the Urban Design Program.

So, that is a complete report of my requests of MSD funding for this year. I want to thank you for the opportunity to work in partnership with you. This is some of the most exciting work I've ever done in my life; it is some of the most rewarding, but I will tell you it is hard. This is hard work but our staff, and our Board were honored to do it. We love the fact that we get to shape the next generation, the next decade of growth for the City of Charlotte in the northeast community, and we really, really love building an inclusive and resilient community. I have one PSA, and that is before I open up for questions, because I will forget this. On WFAE tomorrow there is a segment with Mike Collins on reducing gun violence and it features three of our community leaders, African American leaders and includes Gary Crump, from Men of Destiny; Heal Charlotte's, Greg Jackson; and Gemini Boyd of Project Bolt. So, if you can just make a note to tune into that. These guys are doing incredible work in our community and we meet with them frequently; we fund a lot of their efforts in our schools and in our communities around reducing gun violence and creating safe communities.

Mayor Lyles said as you heard as we ask Center City Partners, there is a revenue neutral rate, the information on your reserve funds, what is the calculation as well as what you are asking us to approve and if you would get that data to us in a little bit more detail than that it will help the Manager as we are going through the budget process.

Ms. Heater said I will be delighted to.

**Councilmember Mayfield** said what is the financial partnership with the County because you had in the presentation parks, libraries and trails, what is that?

Ms. Heater said our relationship with the County has been challenging. When we look at the investment across Mecklenburg County or where the County is investing its resources it is not around Mecklenburg County. They've made significant investment in Center City over the past decade, and we have a beautiful Center City, and we have beautiful parks, and we are going to have a staller library. Getting the County to realize that the centers that are on the outskirts of the City are as equally important as our center has been an uphill battle, but we are committed to it.

**Councilmember Phipps** said I would like to thank Ms. Heater and her team for the hard work that they do in University City Partners. I know the amount of work that goes on; people were talking about how University City looked two years ago; I can just tell you how it looks from 21-years out, because that is when I first came to University City. As far as the litter maintenance program is concerned; how much does that cost? Is that \$45,000?

Ms. Heater said it is \$45,000.



Mr. Phipps said so that is monies that we cobbled together, we got donations I think from UNC-Charlotte. Did the Hospital contribute any monies to that?

Ms. Heater said the Hospital didn't contribute to this project; they contributed to other projects. UNC-Charlotte actually picked up a piece of University City Boulevard that is closer to the University, and they've deployed their staffs to help so that we could meet the budget allocation we had for that.

Mr. Phipps said I mention that, because it seems like to me that is funds that somehow, I would think in this budget cycle that we could find a way to come up with a litter maintenance plan that would prevent expenditure of this nature from coming out of the scarce resources of a body like University City Partners to be able to go and dip through and find monies for that. All these other things you talk about, these priorities the things we are trying to do up there to make that a place of vibrant safe community; all those different things there has got to be a way that we could; this budget cycle is going to be really critical as we try to undertake some of the things we want to do without going backwards. So, I would hope that we would find a way to be able to accommodate these budget requests in a way that would make us feel good about what we are doing up there in that regard. So, I'm going to be doing all I can to help with that.

Ms. Heater said two quite notes in that regard; University City Partners was formed in 2003; it has an incredibly low millage rate. In 2007 they expanded the District but they did not increase the millage rate, so the millage rate that has been funding University City Partners has been the same since 2003.

**Councilmember Driggs** said I just wanted to say the mix of your revenues has changed a lot; so, it would really be good to have a side by side comparison with explanations.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said to Mr. Driggs' point, also if we could compare the revenue with Center City because they are both special districts in terms of the expenditures as well.

Ms. Heater said I think we could both probably get that to Phil, and he could provide that to you. No problem at all.

Ms. Ajmera said I would like to see how the special tax districts compare, and I appreciate the work that you are doing.

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#### **ITEM NO. 5: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CHARLOTTE REGIONAL VISITORS AUTHORITY UPDATE AND STRATEGY**

This item will be brought back to the April 22, 2019 Council Meeting.

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#### **ITEM NO. 6: ANSWERS TO MAYOR AND COUNCIL CONSENT ITEM QUESTIONS**

There were no outstanding Consent Item Questions.

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#### **ITEM NO. 7: CLOSED SESSION**

Motion was made by Councilmember Egleston, seconded by Councilmember Newton, and carried unanimously to pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) to go into closed session to consult with attorneys employed or retained by the City to preserve the attorney-client privilege.

The meeting was recessed at 6:09 p.m. to go into closed session in Room 267. The meeting returned to open session at 7:03 p.m. and immediately recessed to move to the Meeting Chamber for the regularly scheduled Business Meeting.

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### **BUSINESS MEETING**

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina reconvened for a Business Meeting on Monday, April 8, 2019 at 7:09 p.m. in the Meeting Chamber of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Vi Lyles presiding. Councilmember present we Dimple Ajmera, Ed Driggs, Larken Egleston, Julie Eiselt, Justin Harlow, LaWana Mayfield, James Mitchell, Matt Newton, and Greg Phipps.

**ABSENT UNTIL NOTED:** Councilmember Braxton Winston, II

**ABSENT:** Councilmember Tariq Bokhari

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### **INVOCATION AND PLEDGE**

Councilmember Ajmera gave the Invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

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### **COMMENTS BY MAYOR LYLES**

**Mayor Lyles** said I would like to take a minute to address a situation that we have. I want to address the idea and the thinking that this situation is becoming a real threat to our neighborhood and therefore to our City. Too many of our people have been injured or have died. Within the last 10-days we've lost six people. We lost Kendal Crank, a mother killed in a gang cross-fire. Jonathon Whitlow, who was found rolled in a carpet, Santa Acevedo, shot by a man who dated her daughter, with her husband still in the hospital, James Scott Anderson, who was found in a homeless camp. Derrick Chambers, killed in a parking lot, and Teaun Bates also killed in a parking lot.

It goes without saying that we as Mayor and the City Council, but more importantly as a community of people who want the absolute best for ourselves and our families, we cannot afford to sit idly by and ignore the extreme loss of life being suffered in our community right now. And even more than that, we must not point fingers, not look for places to place blame on others or shirk our own civic responsibility by expecting someone else to solve this problem. We must seek to get our community back on track; we must come together now in a way perhaps unlike anything we've ever experienced previously and focus our energies on what we, we each of us can do to build the best outcome for our community. Instead of focusing on the harm we do to each other, though it is important to acknowledge and to be truthful about the various sources of our pain, we need to work collaboratively from all corners of our community to effectively challenge and overcome this epidemic of gun violence that is spreading too quickly in our streets and across our neighborhoods. Like my colleagues, I'm out in the community we know that we aren't in charge of everything, but what we are in charge of is doing everything that we can to be a part of a greater community, something greater than just living here in Charlotte. We need to deal with this, and we need to know what approach we should take and how we will make a difference in own neighborhoods and not just in our own but neighborhoods that belong to others. As civic leaders and community members, it is important that we advocate an inclusive approach that enables us to work across lines and in some instances even across ideology, because we have to tackle this issue. Let us be clear, gun violence of any sort cannot become the norm in Charlotte. This is our City. We cannot devolve into a culture that is so devalues life and the lives of our neighbors that we willingly allow it to continue to be shot down without us doing anything. We must do everything in our power to correct course and reverse this damning and

disconcerting trend. We have to want more for our community and ourselves. We have to do better and I know we can do better. Let us continue to keep people, not just the six that I talked about in the last 10-days but the more than 30 people who have lost their life in our City and what are we going to do about it.

Thank you so much for allowing me to do this; it pains me but, it has been something that I have been thinking about in the context of the many issues that we have for the last few weeks. I appreciate that and I expect that we are going to hear more about it as we go forward as this City and this City Council, and I hope all of you will continue to think what can you do to do better.

**Councilmember Winston arrived at 7:13 p.m.**

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#### **ITEM NO. 14: CHARLOTTE CITY COUNCIL RULES OF PROCEDURE**

**Mayor Lyles** said this came out of our Budget and Effectiveness Committee; the Council has talked about it several times. We have actually amended our rules once to do it, which our City Attorney did not think that was a good idea, but what we are doing is changing our rules to allow for 10 people to speak, up to 15; and if we have 15 we have people speak for two minutes and 10; so, today because we are going to have 15 speakers each speaker will have two minutes to speak.

**Joseph Margolis, 6549 Quarterbridge Lane** said I noticed this item on the agenda tonight, and I'm generally supportive of it. I really like the idea of allowing even more people to come and be heard before this dais; so, thank you for your work on this issue. I do take exception to a certain aspect of your policy that I hope you will consider as you deliberate on this. What I've noticed is that once you get to speaker 11 what will be triggered is that the time limit will go down per speaker from three minutes to two minutes. I think that this automatic trigger is a potential loss to the community; this type of forum is a unique opportunity for a speaker to prepare a talk on a broad topic and maybe go a little bit deeper than one might normally go when you are just speaking on a specific item on the agenda. What I'm asking for is not that you just say leave it at three; you guys probably have past agendas where you might need to have some flexibility I would think away some of that additional 15-minues that is going to come if you just allow five more speakers on there. Right now, it 10 speakers and that is 30-minutes, right. Five more speakers that is 45-minutes. So, what I propose is that you keep it at three but amend the language in there to give yourselves flexibility on a per forum basis to take it down incrementally by 15 seconds down to two minutes, by two minutes and 45-seconds, two minutes and 30-seconds, two minutes and 15-seconds. That way it is a show of good faith that you are doing everything you can to value the input that we want to give you.

Mayor Lyles said what we are doing is if 10-people or fewer are speaking they will have three minutes. We will know if there is more than 10 and everybody gets two minutes! so, nobody gets three minutes if it is over 10-people; everybody gets two minutes at that point. That is the way it is written and recommended to us today.

**Phillip Benham, 761 Harris Street, Concord** said I am going to read you a scripture; it says I also gave them over to statutes that were not good and laws they could not live by. I let them become defiled through their gifts, the sacrifice of every first born that I might fill them with horror so that they would know that I am God. What is happening in our streets, blood coursing down the corridors of our streets, our work places and our schools and we are just sitting here looking at each other with awkward amazement saying we've got to be inclusive, and we are going to get together and we've got to better than this.

Mayor Lyles said point of order, you have to be speaking on the subject that we are talking about.

Mr. Benham said I am ma'am, just a second, please don't interrupt me. I am going to get exactly there, because I want our voices to be heard and unfortunately, they are not being

heard by, you and you are making laws now that will change and really reduce our opportunity to speak. You should have every time that this Council meets, an opportunity for people to speak and address this Council. Don't make it one time a month that you are going to do a Citizen's Forum but make it every time you are here. We are the people and you are our servants and you need to hear from us.

Now, why you changed this rule number five, why you changed it from Citizen Forum to Public Forum I began to understand. I didn't realize, because I looked at what citizen means. Here is what citizen means according to Webster's Dictionary; citizen is one who enjoys freedom and privilege in the city which he resides. He is a freeman of the city and distinguished from a foreigner or one who is not entitled to its franchises. As a citizen, one has the privileges of exercising elective franchise or can vote. Listen, you are limiting our speech in the name of trying to broaden it; you are limiting it. You are squeezing out every last breath of liberty we have. Now, you need to listen to the people, because we are a government of the people by the people for the people.

The first person that quoted that was not Abraham Lincoln, it was John Wycliff, and it was in the preface of his Bible that the Bible is for the government of the people by the people and for the people. That was in 1381. These are important things and you have denied and are removing God from the foundation of this country, and we need God if we are going to get this thing right.

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Mitchell, to approve an amendment to the Charlotte City Council Rules of Procedure; Rule No. 5: Addressing Council.

**Councilmember Winston** said to answer Mr. Benham's question, we allow not just citizens of Charlotte but all of the public to come and speak to us even if they live in Concord. I would like to say, although I agree with Mr. Margolis as well, I would have liked to have 15 people at three minutes. I understand the time crunch, but Ma'am Mayor and members of Council. I think we need to add some language to this because what we ran into during the last Public Forum where we did have 15 people sign up but, 15 didn't show up. I don't even think 10 people showed up, so they were given only two minutes so people actually lost the ability to address us. I think we should add some language if possible to make sure that everybody on that list is present at the time that the Public Forum starts so we can determine whether people are going to get two minutes or three minutes, because there was actually a deficit of time during our last Public Forum.

Mayor Lyles said I went up to 15 when we gave everybody two. We did go beyond 10 to the 15.

Mr. Winston said correct but, 15 people signed up but not even 10 people showed up.

Mayor Lyles said it was more than 10, because I went to the waiting list and started calling it there.

Mr. Winston said I still don't think it got up to 15.

Mayor Lyles said well, it probably didn't but everybody that signed up whether they were in attendance or on the waiting list were heard.

Mr. Winston said everybody got a chance; I still do not believe we got up to threshold so I think that we should have some type of where we can call everybody down, and if it is determined that 15 people signed up but only nine people are here, those nine people should get three minutes and not two minutes.

Mayor Lyles said it was 11.

Mr. Winston said we can set a rule that you have to be here at the start of the Public Forum; that is an additional rule.



Mayor Lyles said we have had people that we've called that were late and I always go back to the end of the list and ask those folks if they have arrived late because I don't know the reasons with traffic or parking. I just try to make sure everybody gets a chance.

Mr. Winston said it is a compromise, trying to give more liberty on one side and we have to tie it down on another with timeliness and attendance I also think that is fair because there are also situations like tonight where we have business upstairs that needed to be taken care of and we give that cushion.

A substitute motion was made by Councilmember Winston, seconded by Councilmember Harlow, to have a roll call prior to the start of the Public Forum which will determine the time limit that speakers have pursuant to what is in the current proposal.

**Councilmember Egleston** said I was just trying to determine if Mr. Winston is proposing essentially a set amount of time that we are going to identify and then divide that by up to 15 speakers.

Mr. Winston said no, what I'm saying is call a roll call and if we have 10 and under present when all is said and done, the waiting list and everything, then they get three minutes. If they have filled 11 to 15 they get two minutes.

**Councilmember Harlow** said I thought I was understanding him to be proposing basically a true time limit for Public Forum, which is the cap regardless of how many speakers we have, knowing that we will go up to 15 speakers. I'm just looking for clarity.

**Councilmember Eiselt** said what I understand Mr. Winston to say is that if there are only 10 speakers signed up and no wait list it is three-minutes. If it is over 10 up to 15 it goes to two minutes, but we figure it out at the beginning of the Public Forum saying raise your hand if you are here to speak and if we know that it is more than that then everybody has two minutes. If most everybody didn't show up, because it is snowing or whatever and there is only eight people out there then they have three-minutes, but, what we have to do then is anybody who shows up after that, up to 10, doesn't get to speak if we said everybody gets three-minutes.

**Councilmember Driggs** said I think to that point, anybody who shows up such that the number was lower than 10 before and exceeds 10 afterwards can't speak, because we will have established the schedule of three minutes per speaker. The trouble is it gets a little tricky, and I wanted to clarify. I think what I understood Mr. Margolis to say was take the number of people who are actually here, divide it by 30 minutes and give each of them that much time so that we don't have a 22-minute hearing if 11 people show up. Unfortunately, this is a little slippery. I like the idea of seeing who is here at the beginning of the meeting, so I'm on board with that substitute motion, because we could have the situation, even if we haven't where because of people not showing up everybody is limited to two minutes and then there were only eight of them. I'm okay with that; I think the other modifications are trickier.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said just so that I'm clear the 30-minutes that we currently have for the Public Forum for 10 speakers will stay the same but if there are additional speakers, up to five more so two-minutes extra, so we will go up to the max 40. Is that what your motion is Mr. Winston?

Mr. Winston said no ma'am. The answer to this is not going to be perfect. This is under the idea that we want to give as many people the ability to address us as possible and so, it is 10 and under speakers present three minutes a piece; over 10 speakers, 11 to 15 they get two minutes a piece.

**Councilmember Phipps** said so, is it a situation that we are going to be taking a roll multiple times during a meeting or what. What is the beginning defined as, when we

come to the dais or when it is the Public Forum time? I'm trying to figure out what is the time when we take an inventory of who is here; is it when we are at the dais or is it the time that has been published for the meeting?

Mr. Winston said it would at the time when we start the Public Forum after we have had the introductions, our Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance. Then the Mayor opens up the Public Forum, she would give a roll call and we would determine how many we had and after that roll call is done we would proceed with the Public Forum.

Mr. Phipps said can people still sign up to speak?

Mr. Winston said if it is 10 and under we have determined that they can get three minutes; so, everybody gets three minutes. If there is eight people that show up, eight people get three minutes. That means that leaves room for two more people to sign up, and that is it. If it is over 10, and they get two minutes; we have the amount of time already allocated.

Mr. Driggs said other people could sign up to the extent that the number doesn't exceed 15.

Mayor Lyles said this was a Committee discussion that was sent and the Council has done it a couple of times; so, we are just trying to figure it out. Be patient with us.

Mr. Winston said if at the time of the roll call there are under 10 people present you get three minutes a piece up to 10 people period. If at the time of the roll call there are over 10 people, but not 15, you get two minutes a piece and you can sign up to the number 15.

Mr. Phipps said when our rules allow people to sign up to speak? Can they sign up to speak during the time when people are speaking?

Mr. Winston said basically what we are doing is eliminate the wait list, because we are going to determine at the beginning during the roll call who is here.

Ms. Eiselt said this is the problem when we decide these things at the dais, because it was discussed in Committee. I support the motion but it does seem like there is a lot of confusion, which means I think we need to go back.

Mr. Phipps said this was deferred to Committee and we discussed it at Committee and we brought it to the full Council and now we are back at discussing it around the dais.

The vote was taken on the substitute motion and recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Driggs, Egleston, Eiselt, Harlow, Mitchell, Newton, and Winston.

NAYS: Councilmembers Mayfield and Phipps.

**Councilmember Mitchell** said I'm going to bring up a tough one Mayor. These forums are for us to hear from the citizens of Charlotte; 879,000 citizens in our great City. The frustration I have is when we have someone who doesn't live in Charlotte, don't own property in Charlotte and use your time to come down here and speak to us. So, we as a Council really need to look at who we are going to allow to speak to govern and hold us accountable, because please hold us accountable, but the right people should hold us accountable. So, part of this Mayor, I would like to a location provision that you need to own or have a residence in Charlotte, North Carolina to stand at that podium to talk for two or three minutes.

Mayor Lyles said I'm going to refer that to the Budget and Effectiveness Committee. It that okay with you to defer it to Committee, so we will take a look at that.

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## PUBLIC FORUM

### Affordable Housing

**Joseph Margolis, 6549 Quarterbridge Lane** said on March 25, 2019, I streamed your meeting just in time for spirited discussion on the State's Housing Tax Credit Program. I learned something from it; yet for the entire 50 minutes back and forth the word segregation was mentioned only once about this topic, and at no point was any of this discussion framed inside the City of Charlotte's role in implementing and intrenching structural racism in our City and the devastating generational impact that has resulted upon its black citizens because of it. Tonight, I'm asking this body to undergo a process where you start looking and grappling for language to enable us as your constituents to join you in these types of discussions. My fear is that there are certain consequences that we may not intend but come upon us because of this. This morning I was in Lake Arbor and had the privilege of attending a bus stop community action for the kids there, giving them snacks on the way to school, and it was a wonderful event. But what I learned there was that they haven't had a mailbox in that apartment facility for years; they haven't been receiving mail, and you may have already known that. I don't know but to me I see that as those types of results in our City I believe they can be drawn from our history of decisions made by racists that once sat in all of those seats at the same time. I'm not saying you all are racists. I believe everybody in those seats have the best intentions for this City. What I am saying is that we have work to do.

### ICE Raids

**Jennifer De La Jara, 708 East 8th Street** said first I would like to say thank you for the work that you've been doing over the past few weeks with the immigrant community. I follow it online and I appreciate that. Tonight, I come to you to speak about the ICE raids as a Charlotte business owner and I would like to frame my specific comments around my principle employee, Laura who is here with us tonight. You see, Laura is on DACA, and you may be sitting there thinking well, why would she have to worry about the ICE raids because she is documented, right? But, you see that it just it, she too has to be concerned about the ICE raids, because what we know for sure is that ICE does not honor the fourth amendment protection that have been extended to non-citizens by the Supreme Court in their racial profiling. Instead, they pick up people without warrants and throw them in the detention center and let the courts figure it out later. I have had a unique opportunity to go into the ICE detention center and interview detainees, and I can tell you from first-hand experience that there are people sitting in there right now who have documentation just like Laura. In fact, there are cases where US citizens have been unlawfully detained. So, what I'm asking you to do is to make a bold step as a City, and not just consider that it is not something under your purview, I know there are things that you have been doing, and I'm appreciative of it but, let's add it to the Federal Legislative Agenda that we call for specific immigration reform. Laura should not be living in a constant state of unknow, one day excited but the courts just blocked keeping her here and the next day wondering if she is going to be kicked back to the country that she has not visited since she was two-years old, being forced to abandon her American born son and being forced to forfeit on the Wells Fargo loan on her home. Finally, what about me as a business owner? I don't want to lose my best employee. We need to do more as a City; it is not just political. It is humanitarian issue, and it is an economic issue when we think about the fallouts that will happen.

### Global Vocational Training Center

**Michael Norman, 4921 Albemarle Road** said I am the founder of Global Vocational Training Center and owner of International Electrical Solutions, Inc. Thank you for allowing me to speak to you today; thank you Matt for visiting the school and your support; thank you Ms. Mayfield for your support. Global Vocational Training Center is an NCCER National Center of Constructional Educational Research, certified program, working with adolescents, recent high school graduates, ex-offenders, unemployed, under employed men and women, veterans, dislocated workers and anyone else who is re-entering the community or struggling to find work in the Charlotte Metropolitan area. I myself do Bible

study at Jail Central on Sundays. During orientation, I was told that 95% of the jail population is African American. That was one year ago; I pray that the percentage is less today. This news blew my mind to a point that it created a drive in me to do something about it. This is my solution. We are training an NCCER core curriculum, light skilled in Electrical 1 and Electrical 2. The program is six-months, four days a week from the hours of 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Global Vocational Training Center brings bankers, financial experts, business owners to empower our students. Our goal is to create an entrepreneurial mindset. After students graduate, they will receive an NCCER Certificate and \$300 worth of electrician tools and a job. We would like to the City to work with us to educate, empower and employ our community. Mr. Dick reached out to me and we are having next month. We are committed and passionate about helping people transform their lives. We are Global Vocational Training Center where we educate, empower, and employ.

### **Conditions in Charlotte**

**Rodney McGill, 1717 West Boulevard** said I just spent about \$30 to get down here, wait about an hour and a half, but you know that it is my duty to do this. Speaking for the black people in Charlotte, North Carolina and to Mayor Vi Lyles specifically about your statement two-years ago before the election when you said that Charlotte's problem was based on there wasn't enough focus on race and poverty. We would really like to hear from you and see how much focus has been put on in the last two-years in your administration in race and poverty. Braxton, I appreciate you man. I appreciate what you did right there, and I understand more of what you deal with on a day to day basis now. Matt Newton, I heard you last week talking about marginalized communities and working with communities, and I heard the Mayor before this finding a better way to do things. Three years I sat in here and said we are going to get rid of all of the people that really wasn't with the community, and we got six new Council people. Now, we've got 40 of those organizations together in the Charlotte East Business District right in your District like I told you last year Matt, and we are making great strides in doing that. I'm making sure, I want everybody in Charlotte black, do not ask City Council for anything that has to do with money or resources. There is 50-years, 100-years of underdevelopment on the west side of town, and it is not accidental.

### **Next Level Leadership**

**Beverly Sanders, 6224 Forest Palm Drive** said I am Vice President of Next Level Leadership Inaugural Class. Next Level Leadership is a non-profit leadership development organization created to empower African Americans to lead. The program is intentional in creating knowledgeable African American leaders for ever changing future of our communities, City, County, and State. As a Charlotte native and a City of Charlotte employee, Next Level Leadership is near to my heart, because it is helping me build the network and skills needed to lead the very community that raised and shaped into the woman I am today. In an effort to reduce the staggering statistics that black males are nine times more likely to be suspended than other students in Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools and make up more than 79% of short-time suspension, Class 1 hosted a day of mindfulness this past Saturday for over 40 African American males ranging from ages eight to 18. The participants were taught yoga, meditation, healthy expressions through a drawing exercise and critical thinking skills through board games. After the event the feedback received from participants was that they felt focused, peaceful, employed, courageous, and loved. Officer Joe Pendergrass of CMPD said it was a phenomenal program and that all students of the targeted ages should receive this training. The mindful event was a day to help students stop, breath, and think. Throughout the program we have heard from dynamic leaders in the community. A special thank you to Housing and Neighborhood Services Director Pamela Wideman, Fire Chief Reginald Johnson and Police Chief Kerr Putney for speaking with our class about their duties and the great work they are doing in our community. Class I of Next Level Leadership is comprised of 22 amazing people; those present please stand. As we did with the Be Mindful Event Class, I will continue to implement the teachings and strategies learned to endure the future success of Charlotte and its residents. On behalf of Next Leadership thank you for your time.



### **Equity Intersectionality**

**Connie Mack, 2317 Sonoma Valley Drive** said I am here to speak about the intersectional justice that is necessary here in Charlotte, specific to equity and climate change. Over 100 individuals from Charlotte were sent to Atlanta a few weeks ago with the NAACP to really learn what climate reality is under the guidance of former Vice President Al Gore, and they left amazed, shocked, and horrified of climate reality is. I've learned recently that here in Charlotte the programs that we had and the committee we had has now been placed under a general program or a neighborhood program, and what we decided was it was more important for us to have an intentional move deed dive conversation about how do we save this planet and how do we save our City. We believe that it is necessary for us to have a separate and set apart Committee of individuals from the community who has been doing this work for over 10-years to ensure that we do the right thing by all citizens of Charlotte. More importantly, when we look at all of the justices we work for, whether it is equity, educational, homelessness, creating housing, the most important thing is saving this planet. You may not know this, but 92 scientist all over the world have determined that we have less than 12-years to save the earth. The earth will be here but it will be uninhabitable; so, all the other things we work for won't mean a thing if the earth is not safe. Clean water, clean energy, clean air is a human right, and in Charlotte we don't have that every single day. We have students who are drinking water with lead in it right now. Please, if you do nothing else set a part a committee to specifically deal with climate, climate justice, climate reality.

### **Environment Committee**

**Donald Keen, 3009 Park Road** said I am from the North Carolina Climate Solution Coalition. We are indeed proud to be involved with the City of Charlotte Environmental Committee over the last two-years; as part of a group, which included our Chairperson Dimple Ajmera along with the City Head of Staff Rob Phocas, his staff and all members of the Stakeholders group of citizens, members of the Environmental Committee, together we all managed to develop a strong resolution that calls for zero carbon for the City owned buildings and fleets by 3030. This is tangible and challenging and has already made our City be recognized by others as an environmental leader, an action plan or SEAP which was a product of months of additional work. Together both of these were approved unanimously by this City Council; thank you very much for that. We are the basis for being awarded a great from Mayor Greenburg's foundation of over \$2 million. Unfortunately, we just recently were informed that the Environmental Committee is being folded into two other Committees and that Ms. Ajmera, our leader will not be the Chair of that Committee. With such success so far in our work, why? Why would we change horses in the beginning of implementation of such a vital action plan? There is much follow-up to be done; restore the Committee please.

### **Combining Committees**

**Martin Zimmerman, 1616 Bonnie Lane** said I am here to mirror Mr. Keen's remarks in a slightly different way. I also am a member of the Char-Meck Climate Leader's Group. I want to apologize to the two Chairpersons who have lost the Chairs of the other Committees. I'm not as well informed on the other Committees as I am about the Environmental Committee, and I've really been focusing entirely on the Environmental Committee in terms of the climate change crisis that we are all going through now. I just wanted to address my remarks the Honorable Mayor that on a personal level you have interacted many times over the last seven years or so, especially in regard to your leadership of the Planning and Transportation Committee. I have found you to always be deliberative, almost always responding to my e-mails. I remember at one point you thanked me for being kind of your conscious on one of the issues that came up. I was especially proud of your vigorous support of affordable housing and getting the funds set up, and I sent you an e-mail right away as soon as I found out about that. Obviously, knowing not only our relationship but your reputation for being collaborative and working in partnerships and listening to people I was really quite surprised by this decision. All I'm asking is you take some time, take a step or two back, think about the future two-years,

four-years, six-years into the future and not regret the decision that you've been making to combine the two committees.

### **Invitation to Bid Dig Event**

**Edna Chirico, 1201 Greenwood Cliff** said there should be a little invitation being passed around right now. For those of you who don't know me, I'm Edna Chirico, Regional Director for Out Teach. You may have known this as Green Teacher Network or Real School Gardens in the past. I'm here with an invitation for you to join us on May 10, 2019 for our fifth Outdoor Learning Laboratory Transformation, also known as a Big Dig. This is sponsored by Duke Energy and will engage over 100 of their employees in building 12 to 14 outdoor learning features, kind of like an HGTV event. Out Teach does two things which supports your upper mobility, environmental and community engagement goals. First, we train teachers at our Title 1 School on how to take their classes outside and use the outdoors as a three-dimensional classroom making learning real and relevant. This improves teacher's effectiveness and student engagement, key indicators of academic improvements. While the teachers learn how to focus on their science, math, and literacy we also infuse nutrition education, environmental literacy and all other aspects of the whole child's initiative. We've been a partner of Mecklenburg Public Health for the past four-years, now supporting the research that connects improved nutrition with improved academics. The second thing we do is build dynamics outdoor learning gardens, safe outdoor spaces inviting for parents and community members. As I mentioned, this is our fifth Big Did Event to date; we have brought over \$400,000 in corporate money to our Title 1 Schools and nearly 400 volunteers, many of whom regularly engage with these schools. Thank you for those of you and I think about half of you who have already engaged with us at various events. Hope to see you May 10th.

### **SEAP and the Future of Charlotte**

**Mary Ellis Stevens, 628 North Alexander Street** said I just turned 14, and this Friday, April 12, 2019 will mark week seven of my school strike for climate. Our strike this part of the International Fridays for Future Movement Founded by 16-year old Swedish Climate Activist, Greta Thunberg, who was recently nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize. On Friday, thousands of kid's world will skip school in protest in front of local parliament. I have been right outside this building for the past six-weeks, and we demand climate action and climate justice. On March 15, 2019, 1.5 million students worldwide struck. I am here regarding the Mayor's decision to merge the Environmental Committee and two others into a joint neighborhood committee. The environment will now receive one-third of the time and attention that it used to and one-thousandth percent of the time and attention it deserves. The SEAP is an extremely ambitious plan that is crucial to the future of Charlotte as a sustainable City, and there is no question that it requires a committee to oversee its implementation. Please restore the Environment Committee. You owe it to your children, your grandchildren, your constituents now and your constituents in the future. If that is too abstract you own it to me. Let me close by saying that if the environment is important enough for me to sit alone for five-hours every week for the past six-weeks and then spend another five-hours making up the work I missed, the environment is important enough for it to have its own Committee.

### **City Council Committee Reorganization**

**Ronald Ross, 3108 Dawnshire Avenue** said I am President of Northwood Estates Community Organization and also a member of the Historic West End Air Keepers affiliated with Clean Air Carolina. We just completed a two-year study collecting data in regards to the air quality that is on the Beatties Ford Road Corridor, and I think you just received the report of that recently. What we are looking at is the issue of environmental justice that arises when certain communities through no fault of their own are more impacted than others by the sources of pollution that is located near where they live, work, and play. We've started an initiative on the Beatties Ford Road Corridor to address these issues by obtaining the data with the air quality information, getting our residents involved in advocacy and training throughout the corridor. We need your support to continue this work and continue to reduce the air pollution that is prevalent in our community and also

improve the air quality and also make it better for the rest of the City of Charlotte. I want to express my opposition to the elimination of the Environmental Committee, and I would like to request a formal explanation of why that decision was made.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Ross just made the point that I was trying to make around our Committees. When we have our neighborhoods involved in this work and as we talk about building strength of a neighborhood that means a lot, but I know that several of you have questioned what this new structure for our Council Committees, and I want you to know this wasn't done. I always tell people that you may not agree with my rationale but you will know my rationale, so I'm going to give you my rationale to it right now.

You know what is important is not how necessarily we do the work, but that we get the work done and it is not the specific name or a composition of a Committee that drives the work of this Council. What it is, is that we work together and really think about what we are doing collectively to advance equity and opportunity for everyone. I was at [inaudible] University when environmental justice was not a word that everybody knew so, my idea around this is always built around the idea of where did those highways go and tear up African American neighborhoods. Where did we put plants that did not really matter because of industrial zoning because of African American neighborhoods? That is my life; I know that. It is my core, so when we talk about this and we start thinking about what are we doing it is something that everyone of us just like I talked about the violence in this community that we have to do, individually and collectively. How we do is more important for everyone around this dais.

I met Mayor Bloomberg in his Leadership Class that I'm still attending, still trying to learn to do my very best by everyone in this City, he then invited me to The Women for Climate Change and his philanthropy did that for me and that Climate Change Conference reinforced what this Council had approved in January, that we needed to stop talking in silos and begin to work on a collaborative approach. So, I spoke at that Conference, and I reiterated my conviction that we have to innovate through sustainability. Now, this new Committee structure isn't just about the Environmental Committee, but it is about every neighborhood in this community having sustainability, economic justice, economic development, good roads, good sidewalks. You have heard me say over and over again, we can put a house in a neighborhood but that neighborhood doesn't exist until we put sidewalks, trees, clean air and clean water, because it is not one segment of anything that we do that doesn't impact the other.

When I think about that, healthy neighborhoods and the work that we are doing around that; it is having a safe street, knowing that you can go outside and walk without feeling your personal safety being violated. It is where we protect people from dirty water and dirty air, and if we are going to do that and pursue the new job opportunities presented, we have to do it on neighborhood focus. Now, the Council had a long discussion about this at their Council Retreat, and we made a decision to have three priorities and the Committees work under those priorities. When you talk about what is important around this it is actually if we can break down the silos between our Engineering Department and our Neighborhood Department by having them work together on a team, that Council Committee can actually encourage them to be innovative, to put more resources in it. We can have housing all day long, and you know that is my heart but, I know it is not enough because I grew up on a street where I saw life every day and valued it. People went to work, they had jobs, they supported each other and that is what this Committee structure is about. It is about getting people to think holistically about we improve our City, and it is not something that I came up with on my own; I'm not that smart all the time, just a little bit, but not all the time, but this was a collective conversation among a group of people that serve you all.

The other thing that I always say about myself; let's try it, if it doesn't work we fix it. But, if we don't try it we are going to end up with these same silos that we've had. In fact, every member of this Council has come to me and said well, you know you are doing housing but what about this and I think that was the impetus for our change and I commit to you that we are going to try this and if it doesn't work then we'll try something better. But, this City has got to be able to pivot a lot more than just having a tradition. Now, all of



that to say I believe in the work of this Council; I believe this work is structured in a way that we can deliver it, and I hope that you will give enough patience and time to see if it works. Thank you for rational explanation.

**Councilmember Eiselt** said I just want to offer a perspective on behalf of a Councilmember who was never on the Environmental Committee, and that doesn't mean that I don't have an interest in the Environmental Committee. I was very involved in the Sustainability bond, which our Council has under the new leadership, and I'm sorry that all the people that spoke are leaving because we listened. I would also like to say that I ran for office on community safety, and I said that my number one issue was community safety but that there are two basic rights that we as citizens have, clean water and safe streets and nobody has mentioned. I haven't gotten a single e-mail to point out that community safety has been eliminated too. That has also been rolled into this Committee, but I don't think there is a Councilmember here who will tell you that we have any less of a commitment to community safety. We talked about the 33 murders that we've had. It is painful to see any murder, any loss of life in this community, so just because we don't have a Community Safety Committee doesn't mean that the Council as a whole has any less of a commitment to making our City safe or to keeping our water clean and I just want people to know that. You can certainly reach out to me with environmental concerns, and I'm sure every other Councilmember feels the same way. I have no less of a commitment to those issues than I did before as a Councilmember.

**Councilmember Harlow** said I want to say thanks to everyone who is here today, to those who are tuning in that share in what I believe still exists as a strong priority for this Council and that is being reflected by the members of the community as well. As the Chair of this new combined Neighborhood Development Committee, I want to assure everybody that we will never consider a policy, not as long as I am Chair, without understanding its impacts on the environment. I think what you are getting here through the Mayor's decisions and appointments is going to eventually come out to be a more well managed government. I share the belief that by building safer neighborhoods we always have to have healthy infrastructure involved, trees, energy efficiency, waste mitigation. I live in that west end community that Mr. Ross spoke of, and we talk about the legacy of pollution and vehicle emissions and construction sites that have left long lasting ramifications on disinvested communities, so I as this new Chair have no doubt that with every conversation we have we are going to have those equitable justice conversations as it relates to the environment. But, we are also going to have the new relations of public safety; we are also going to have the new relation to housing and neighborhood development. Too often we heard from you all talking about how we speak in these instances about our priorities and silos. This is a way to un-silo this.

In Mr. Bokhari's absence, he always talks about verticals and horizontals. This is a way for us to help connect some of those dots in a more horizontal fashion. Any policy that has been referred or policy question that has been referred to the Environment Committee will still be a part of this Committee, no different for Housing and Neighborhood Development and no different for Community Safety. This is an opportunity I think for you all to get more out of your Council. I think so often and I will throw us under the bus a little bit here. I think too often we have charged staff to bring us back slide decks of 100 slides to fit into an hour lunch committee meeting, and we wasted your time. We wasted your resources when doing that. To get to quicker policy implications, policy decisions, policy impact that we all want, that we all share I think this is an opportunity to be more structured in a way that gets us to answering those policy questions faster so that we can impact these communities. I do ask you to give this a chance, not because I'm Chairing it, but give this a chance, because we want to serve you better. I supported the SEAP, I respect all the work that the hundreds of stakeholders and Ms. Ajmera led in the efforts to get that before us and get that passed and we are committed to implementing everything that is in that SEAP. We are committed to preserving our tree canopy; we are committed to those things. Those things don't go away just because a Committee changes its name. Again, I urge and I'm hopeful and I know that you all are passionate and I'm passionate with you, that you give this a chance. Allow us to work, still join us at our community meetings; I will continue to work on all the initiatives that were in the various committees that have now been combined. I hope that Ms. Ajmera and others



and the staff and you will as community stakeholders will continue to hold and will continue to meet and have stakeholder sessions. None of these things will change; this is on the record so hold me to it. Hold us to it, but give us a chance please.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said as a former Chair of the Committee I think I should also weigh into this. Obviously, it was in deed a privilege to serve many of you as the Chair of the Environment Committee, and this past year has been historic for Council. We passed the historic Strategic Energy Action Plan to transition to low carbon future followed by American Cities Climate Challenge, which we received over \$2 million in resources to fight the climate change. Thoroughly, we became a global leader in sustainability and resiliency. Let me assure you that my work will not end here. The impact of climate change is truly something that keeps me awake at night, and I recognize that many of you share the same passion. I will continue to listen to you and be your voice to meet our resiliency and SEAP goals and continue to work with the Chair to meet our internal 2030 City goals and community wise 2050 goals. So, stay tuned as we host more stakeholder engagement sessions, and I will continue to include our new Chair of the Committee and collaborate on those goals. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you all; let's make 2019 another historic year for all of us.

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### CONSENT AGENDA

**Mayor Lyles** said we are going to excuse Councilmember Winston; I think by our rules if you are excused it is neutral to the vote, so we will excuse Mr. Winston for the remainder of this agenda.

*[Clerk's Note: Per the Rules of Procedure for the Charlotte City Council - Section 16: Duty to Vote: Every member must vote unless excused by the remaining members as authorized or required by law. A member who wishes to be excused from voting shall so inform the Mayor, who shall take a vote of the remaining members. In all other cases, a failure to vote by a member who is physically present in the Council chamber, or who has withdrawn without being excused by a majority vote of the remaining members present, shall be recorded as an affirmative vote.]*

Motion was made by Councilmember Newton, seconded by Councilmember Harlow, and carried unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, with the exception of Item No. 23 which was pulled for a separate vote and Item No. 24 which was pulled by staff.

#### **Item No. 21: Traffic Signals and Hardware**

(A) Approve a unit price contract to the lowest responsive bidder, Mobotrex, Inc. for the purchase of traffic signal replacement parts and repairs for one year, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contract for up to four, one-year renewal terms with possible price adjustments and to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

#### **Summary of Bids**

Mobotrex, Inc.	\$370,590.00
General Traffic Equipment	\$496,710.00
JQ&G Inc.	\$518,977.80

#### **Item No. 22: Signal and Roadway Construction Services**

(A) Approve a contract in the amount of \$2,457,494.64 to the lowest responsive bidder Blythe Development Co., for the signal and Roadway Construction Services Fiscal Year 2019A, and (B) Approve a contract in the amount of \$2,671,535.70 to the lowest responsive bidder Blythe Development Co., for the Signal and Roadway Construction Services Fiscal Year 2019B.

**Summary of Bids**

**Fiscal Year 2019A**

Blythe Development Company \$2,457,494.64

**Fiscal Year 2019B**

Blythe Development Company \$2,671,535.70

**Item No. 25: Refund of Property Taxes**

Adopt a resolution authorizing the refund of property taxes assessed through clerical or assessment error in the amount of \$18,466.19

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 49, at Page(s) 449-450.

**Item No. 26: Meeting Minutes**

Approve the titles, motions and votes reflected in the Clerk's record as the minutes of February 18, 2019 zoning meeting.

**PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS**

**Item No. 27: Property Transactions – 8” Water Main to Serve 3149 Freedom Drive, Parcel #2**

Resolution of Condemnation of 1,003.56 square feet (.023 acre) in Waterline Easement at 3121 Freedom Drive from Kingott LLC for an amount to be determined for 8” water Main to serve 3149 Freedom Drive, Parcel #2.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 49, at Page(s) 451.

**Item No. 28: Property Transactions – 8” Water Main to Serve 3149 Freedom Drive, Parcel #3**

Resolution of Condemnation of 591.99 square feet (.014 acre) in Waterline Easement at 3119 Freedom Drive from Esther Elder for an amount to be determined for 8” Water Main to Serve 3149 Freedom Drive, Parcel #3.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 49, at Page(s) 452.

**Item No. 29: Property Transactions – Chandworth Drainage Improvements, Parcel #10**

Acquisition of 1,099 square feet (.025 acre) in Storm Drainage Easement, plus 679 square feet (.016 acre) in Sanitary Sewer Easement, plus 1,217 square feet (.028 acre) in Temporary Construction Easement at 3900 Chandworth Road from Nancy R. Sheedy and Raymond Sheedy for \$11,500 for Chandworth Drainage Improvements, Parcel #10.

**Item No. 30: Property Transactions – Chandworth Drainage Improvements, Parcel #14**

Acquisition of 2,132 square feet (.049 acre) in Storm Drainage Easement, plus 1,131 square feet (.026 acre) in Sanitary Sewer Easement, plus 1,676 square feet (.038 acre) in Temporary Construction Easement, plus 170 square feet (.004 acre) in Existing Drainage Accepted as Storm Drainage Easement at 4000 Chandworth Road from Patrick E. Boyle for \$17,500 for Chandworth drainage improvements, Parcel 314.

**Item No. 31: Property Transactions – Chandworth Drainage Improvements, Parcel #17**

Acquisition of 1,283 square feet (.029 acre) in Storm Drainage Easement, plus 4,871 square feet (.112 acre) in Temporary Construction Easement at 4026 Chandworth Road from Elizabeth M. Doster and Simmons Penegar Doster for \$21,435 for Chandworth Drainage Improvements, Parcel #17.

**Item No. 32: Property Transactions – Five Points Plaza Improvements, Parcel #1**  
Acquisition of 1,204 square feet (.028 acre) in Fee Simple, 408 square feet, (.009 acre) in Temporary Construction Easement at 101 Beatties Ford Road from Mechanics and Farmers Bank for \$69,725 for Five Points Plaza Improvements, Parcel #1.

**Item No. 33: Property Transactions – Hampton Storm Drainage Improvements, Parcel #5**  
Acquisition of 1,410 square feet (.032 acre) in Storm Drainage Easement at 3033 Hampton Avenue from Mark H. Westerberg and Elizabeth Auwerter Westerberg for \$14,456 for Hampton Storm Drainage Improvements, Parcel #5.

**Item No. 34: Property Transactions – Little Sugar Creek Tributary Trunk Sewer to North Tryon Street, Parcel #7**  
Acquisition of 2,509 square feet (.058 acre) in Storm Drainage Easement, plus 16,643 square feet (.382 acre) in Sanitary Sewer Easement, plus 4,407 square feet (.101 acre) in Temporary Construction Easement at 1210 North Tryon Street from Men’s Shelter of Charlotte, Inc. for \$101,850 for Little Sugar Creek Tributary Trunk Sewer to North Tryon Street, Parcel #7.

**Item No. 35: Property Transactions – Win Hollow Pump Station, Parcel #3**  
Acquisition of 19,633.02 square feet (.451 acre) in Sanitary Sewer Easement, plus 21,899.94 square feet (.503 acre) in Temporary Construction Easement at 11425 Faires Road from Marcie Heslop Siebert and Steven Paul Siebert for \$20,000 for Win Hollow Pump Station, Parcel #3.

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**ITEM NO. 23: SHAMROCK DRIVE UPGRADES**

**Councilmember Mayfield** said I asked Ms. Harris to provide information on why such a low prevent in minority participation. This is a \$616,127 contract with a 11.15% minority participation which was a total of less than \$70,000 out of \$600,000. Ms. Harris did share that the initial goal was increased by two to three percent, but I really hope that the City Manager can express to our staff the expectations, because it is great when we sit around the dais and say how much we care about upward mobility and economic opportunity, but when minority businesses out of a \$600,000 grant still have very little to no participation or are regulated as the MWSBE or the sub opposed to possibly being identified as the prime contractor on the bid, then we are still falling short.

Motion was made by Councilmember Egleston, seconded by Councilmember Phipps, to approve a contract in the amount of \$616,127 with STV Engineers, Inc. for engineering design services for the Shamrock Drive upgrades project.

The vote was taken on the motion and recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Driggs, Egleston, Eiselt, Harlow, Mitchell, Newton, Phipps, and Winston.

NAYS: Councilmember Mayfield.

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**PUBLIC HEARING**

**ITEM NO. 10: PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FISCAL YEAR 2020 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**Mayor Lyles** declared the hearing open.

There being no speakers, either for or against, a motion was made by Councilmember Egleston, seconded by Councilmember Driggs, and carried unanimously to close the public hearing.

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**ITEM NO. 11: PUBLIC HEARING ON A RESOLUTION TO CLOSE AN UNOPENED ALLEYWAY OFF OF DRUMMOND AVENUE AND CATAWBA AVENUE**

**Mayor Lyles** declared the hearing open.

Motion was made by Councilmember Egleston, seconded by Councilmember Harlow, and carried unanimously to close the public hearing.

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Harlow, and carried unanimously to adopt a resolution to close an unopened alleyway off of Drummond Avenue and Catawba Avenue.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 49, at Page(s) 443-445.

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**ITEM NO. 12: PUBLIC HEARING ON A RESOLUTION TO CLOSE AN UNOPENED ALLEYWAY OFF OF NORTH MCDOWELL STREET AND NORTH MYERS STREET**

**Mayor Lyles** declared the hearing open.

Motion was made by Councilmember Egleston, seconded by Councilmember Driggs, and carried unanimously to close the public hearing.

Motion was made by Councilmember Egleston, seconded by Councilmember Harlow, and carried unanimously to adopt a resolution to close an unopened alleyway off of North McDowell Street and North Myers Street.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 49, at Page(s) 446-448.

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**ITEM NO. 13: CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

**Marcus Jones, City Manager** said you have my 30-day memo in front of you; the only change is the CRVA Update that would have happened tonight; we've moved that to the 22, 2019. I would like to use the remaining time for the City Manager's Report to have Federico Rios to come give us an update on some of the Ad Hoc Committee work that has occurred over the past few weeks.

**Mayor Lyles** said Federico, it is good to see you, and we are really sorry for the loss of your dad.

**Federico Rios, Office of International Relations** said I did want to take the opportunity to thank the members of the Committee and all the members of Council for their support during our Immigrant Community Committee process and especially considering the passing of my father during that process. I'm exceptionally grateful to have been a part of this process, and more than I can every say I'm thankful for Emily Yaffe, the other half of the Office of International Relations and her work during my absence.



We are going to start by going straight into this presentation. Madam Mayor, you gave us a charge on February 14, 2019 to listen to the immigrant community and to identify strategies and actions that we could take. We took on a different approach with these conversations, we didn't want to just hear from community members. We wanted to take the opportunity to educate first, so we spent some time at the beginning of each one of these sessions walking through the differences between the different forms of government, Federal, State, County, and City and then we were able to go through a participatory policy making process where we actually walked people through how to craft policies regarding the challenges that they would express that they were facing in regards to these different forms of government. We had nine meetings total; seven of those meetings were District meetings. Again, thank you for all the Councilmembers that were able to come to their individual District meetings especially. At one District in particular, we had 250 individuals to attend so that 484 attendee total is incredibly large but at one meeting we had a great deal of attendance. We also had two ancillary sessions, one ran by CBI where we talked with business members of our community, individuals that own businesses or were looking to be entrepreneurs and got some input from them and we also met with immigration attorneys.

In these meetings, we cataloged what were the different challenges that community members stated that they were facing, and the way we categorized this is really almost by order of importance. You will see that the top piece we have here is multi-lingual communication. Over and over again in these meetings where we heard from community members was that we were needing to do a better job of communicating in language of origin and language of comfort with community members. We were incredibly proactive in the methodology that we implemented for these meetings and that we offered simultaneous translation in both English and Spanish and were able to do some unique things through our Government Channel to offer translation in other languages as well. We also continually heard about the feeling that residents had about being invisible, sensing that they were living in the shadows and were not being heard and that they were experiencing discrimination even when attempting to access municipal resources.

Again, considering some of the other concerns that were coming up, health concerns especially. We heard from community members that mental health needs were a large part of what they felt needed to be addressed. The stress that they were facing in regard to living in the shadows and one of the things that persistently again came up was the need for more reporting from our City in regard to the positive impact the immigrants were having and the diversity of our staff and how well equipped we are to address their particular needs, not just from a linguistic context but also from a cultural context.

Again, we took a participatory policy making approach, and in so doing we were able to get some input from community members in regards to what they thought were areas that they would like us to begin to look to address. First and foremost, they mentioned the need to under CMPD policies and practices. They also stated that they would like to have a standing statement of support for them as a community. Improving information sharing goes along with the statements that we said earlier around showing up in community with the language of origin being focused upon and the desire for universal representation, especially in immigration court proceedings was also expressed.

Again, we were mindful as we were going through this practice to clearly denote what was in our purview and what was not. We stated that the things that did not fall in our purview would be considered by Councilmembers as things they could proactively look to address in regards to their individual sphere of influence but not something that they would necessarily be able to address as a governmental body so, these were some of the items that came up in reference to that. Again, policies regarding CMS and some of the ID requirements that have come up. ID also came up in regards to state, the need for a form of identification again, going back to the sense of invisibility and then when you thought about some of how immigration reform plays into this. I think we've heard a great deal around the approach that community members desire for us to take regarding an asylum seeker, but we also had an abundance of individuals that came and spoke about the challenges that are currently in place around H1B visas as well.

The Committee has determined that it is best to take a two-phase approach and looking at this from that standpoint it is the Committee's recommendation to endorse the City Manager to promote a Citywide language access plan. So, I want to be clear that we in the past have done many things to translate and interpret our services and resources, but we have not a comprehensive plan to dictate how every Department would function in regards to translation and interpretation. We also want to look at standardizing the incentivization of multi-lingual employees recognizing that the more people we have that speak different languages the better off we are positioned to serve the entire community. Also, we consistent heard that community engagement at immigrant and refugee serving organizations is important. We decided to go into the community and speak to community members where they felt comfortable and where language resources were radially available, and again we had a good return on investment. The amount of effort we put in we got a lot of people that showed up to these meetings. We had also heard that there was a request for data and these again, are things that we can move forward in Phase 1. Looking at the diversity of our City staff and being able to share that out with the community.

Overwhelmingly, in this again language access has come up. This idea that we as a City must show up into spaces where we can clearly speak the language of the individuals that live in this place. What is interesting is that Title Six of the Civil Rights Act mandates that municipalities have a language access plan. So, this is something that is required by the Federal Government, and a language access plan, just to look off the slide a bit, states that we need to provide meaningful access to City programs and services by thorough interpretation services and translated vital documents. Again, I can't tell you how many countless times we've reviewed some of these documents, and they are challenging enough in English let along being accessible to those individuals whose English is not their first language. Also, we need to ensure that when we look at these documents and when we look at translation into communities that we take into account the major languages spoken in those communities.

We recognize that there are five languages that are most spoken in our communities; Spanish, Vietnamese, French, Napoli, and Gujarati and these would be the languages that we would first put forward. This language access plan is a facet of the larger American's with Disabilities Act transition plan that we are undertaking as a City that you all approved in this past budget that you gave \$3 million towards, and so this functions as a facet of that larger work. I want to make sure that that is clean. This is a foundational step; I think a lot of people come into this process thinking we are going to get so many things done at once but you have to take a foundational step before you can really move forward with any of this work. The language access plan allows us to continually communicate with community members.

In Phase 2 we are looking at utilizing a racially equity tool to ensure the diversity of Boards and Commissions. Again, we recognize that everyone's voice in our community is important and we want to ensure that as we look at filling Boards and Commissions that we are looking to ensure that we have diversity of opinion in those Boards and Commissions. We want to explore avenues to attract and expand the recruitment of bilingual employees; we've mentioned this several times over to ensure that as we show in community we are able to speak the many languages that make up the fabric of our City. We also want to explore the creation of a Charlotte compact. Compacts are things that different states have done; so far there are four states in our country that have taken on this compact approach, which is a one-time statement. It is a value statement by which all policy is put through. So, it is really a sieve to ensure that policies are equitable and accessible for all community members and then we want to continue effectively evaluating our community engagement practices. We recognize that some of the success that we had through these meetings offer us an opportunity to see things in a different way. Being able to community with our community members in this way has afforded us a great opportunity to better understand the challenges and issues that they face.

Our next step is to reconvene the Committee and our Chair has asked that that occur on April 17, 2019, and we would have more information for you at that time.

Mayor Lyles said first of all I want to say thank you to your team. They deserve a great deal of applause.

Mr. Rios said Mayor, if I could add again Emily Yaffe, Alexis Gordon, members of the CRC and the Charlotte International Cabinet Ruth Parisa and [inaudible] who are a great resource to us. We are credible grateful for their service.

Mayor Lyles said I would agree with you; we are incredibly grateful for the resources and the activity and participation. If you go from the time that people were saying why aren't you doing something to doing something, I think you have proven the value of our International and Immigrant Office, and I appreciate that from you, and your entire team. I also want to say thank you to those that attended the sessions, I know Larkin was at everyone; Justin, Ed, Julie, James, Greg and Matt. And the Committee members for their deliberation. I really appreciate that as well, so we are looking forward to it, and that isn't a question but, it is really truly a commendation to the entire group and the efforts of every one of you, so very much appreciate that.

**Councilmember Driggs** said I want to mention that at the District 7 meeting, if you recall there were people from India who talked about their visa problems and earlier today I had occasion to speak to Jane Woo who is the head of the North America Chinese Chamber of Commerce, who also talked about the nightmares related to visas so, if we are talking about Federal Agenda items, I recognize that the Latino community dominates and that the relationship with ICE is a big headache, but we must not let other communities feel neglected or fail to take up issues like visa difficulties as well to be truly inclusive.

Mr. Rios said absolutely, and to your point it wasn't just in District 7 that we heard from our large Indian community.

Mr. Driggs said I know District 6 had it also.

Mr. Rios said again, taking into account that the second largest nationality group of our immigrant population here in Charlotte is our Indian community, and so we recognize that makes up a large part of this unique fabric that makes up Charlotte, and we are incredibly grateful for those that have come out, and we should continue to consider the challenges that they face, not just one subset within the larger group.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said I wanted to respond to Mr. Driggs' question about various visa issues by Asian American community at large, Chinese American, Indian American. I had shared some of those concerns that were raised by Indian Americans and Chinese Americans at our last Committee meeting, and I know that is something Emily and Federico are both looking into that, so there will be more update on that as to what resources we can provide to the immigrant community at large.

I think overall the Committee has done a pretty good job of looking at immigration from a holistic perspective considering various diverse communities within our immigrant community, from Latino community to Asian Americans to European immigrants, even our African immigrants. Mr. Egleston, I don't know if you want to share some of the remarks and comments that we had from our last meeting that were specific to Indian Americans as well as some of our other immigrant communities.

**Councilmember Egleston** said as was mentioned the next meeting is going to be on the 17th, but Mr. Driggs touched on one of the main things we heard outside of what a lot of public discussion has been around immigration, which was a large topic in all of our community meetings. I think we do have some solutions that are going to take a little bit more flushing out as it relates to things like visa and pass port access and things that can benefit people for the entirety of our immigrant population. Obviously, some of the solutions that we will propose and hopefully Council will adopt will be more specifically to the point that led to the creation of this Committee, but I think Ms. Ajmera pointed out there are other parts of the immigrant community that this gave an opportunity and a platform to voice concerns that maybe we hadn't been considering or wouldn't have come up but for the creation of this Committee by the Mayor. Some of we will propose on the



17th, and I imagine that will be probably the second to last of the Committee meetings; this is an Ad Hoc Committee and the things that we set forward will continue to take work and action by the Council, but I think the Committee will conclude probably late April or early May but some of those things will come out, and I think we can act on them quickly and others will take more long-term work by Mr. Rios and Ms. Yaffe, but I do appreciate everybody's engagement in this process.

**Councilmember Phipps** said how are we leveraging the work that was done as part of the Immigrant Task Force of a few years ago? I noticed some of the issues and concerns that are raised are similar to those that were raised during that series of public engagements. Are we looking back and mapping any kind of our responses to some of those same issues that are brought up now, or how are we using that information?

Mr. Egleston said I will let Mr. Rios address that as well, but this position exists that he is in, thanks to the work of that Committee and former Councilmember Nancy Carter was here earlier, and she and I overlapped as Chairs during the Immigrant Immigration Task Force creation and work, and it created the position and the office that Federico and Emily are in now and he can speak to that. Some of the recommendations that were put forward and one of the pledges that I had kind of made was that I would try to make sure that recommendations that came from this Committee were things that the Council had purview to take action on. Some of the things that were recommended by the Immigrant Immigration Task Force were deemed to be things that were not necessarily in our purview. Some were and were not implemented; some were and maybe have not yet been implemented but that was reviewed as part of the work of this Committee and Mr. Rios can speak to a couple of those things in particular.

Mr. Rios said I think you captured incredibly well. The work of the Immigrant Integration Task Force actually led to our strategic plan for our office so it actually dictates the work flow that we undertake. There is some overlap; there were many things that fell outside of our jurisdictional purview, and so they are more items that we advocate for, but the things that fall within our purview we work towards. These are the strategic items that we continually push for within the confines of our office.

**Councilmember Eiselt** said talking about outside of our purview; is there any conversation with the County with regards to health and human services and languages? I recall touring Jail North last year I think, and they had access to translation in other languages for the population there, but they include languages like Creole which I think probably went back to a need back in the '80s and hasn't changed. It made me wonder if in fact you are going to have an opportunity to talk to the County about that? Even the Magistrates Court, the Sheriff's Office, any of the health and human services, folks that come into contact with our local population.

Mr. Rios said correct, we will be having discussions with the County once we've cemented what our recommendations are with the Committee and all the partners that are adjacent to it. You noticed we listed some items that community is having challenges understanding, and so we would have conversations around those items. We have been in conversation with Pin [inaudible] who works with the County around some of these challenges and how we could work in tandem rather than doing things in isolation, which I think was a narrative you heard earlier.

**Councilmember Newton** said thank you for all of your hard work; it is starting to pay off. This was a process started by our Mayor about a month and a half ago, so it didn't happen overnight, and I just want to recognize your hard work. The work of my fellow Committee members, our Committee Chair Councilmember Egleston. The language access plan, we had talked about this in Committee; it is ambitious in nature, and I love that and I hope that we can continue to be ambitious with all of our ideas that are springing forward from the Committee's hard work. I think we can do it in a bipartisan fashion too. We are starting to see the Council kind of bridge some of the divide.

Something that came up that I think is important to know is that what we heard often times was that the community was experiencing a gap, a language and communication barrier



to understanding what we as a City provide and what our role is. I think that this language access plan is going to help us bridge that divide, so I'm really forward to it coming forward and us voting on that and looking forward to our continued work on the numerous community recommendations; the Charlotte Compact, the Federal Legislative Agenda; these are things that I think maybe a month and a half ago we might have been worlds apart, but I think we really starting to come together on some of collective vision that we move forward on together.

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#### **ITEM NO. 15: HOUSING FUNDING SUPPORT REQUESTS**

**Queen Thompson, 4933 Lawrence Orr Road** said on behalf of my home, East Charlotte, and I come again to ask you in the petition for the proposed multi-family housing project Shamrock Drive and Hickory Grove Road, that you petition this for an injunction and abandonment of this motion. I do so for several reasons; number one, it is personal. The City staff has allowed my property at 4920 Alice E Orr Drive to be land locked. We are asking for a review of the conduct and the economic interference that the City staff has engaged in. This is federal money; the City receives it and we want to look at federal compliance laws and how we have been treated over and over.

Number two, we are concerned that we do not have enough time as a community to offer alternative solutions. If this apartment complex is allowed it is going to impair the infusion of the restoration of Eastland Mall Corridor. We have been devastated with some of the moves that our government has done, and this has dismantled our community. If we hope to overcome we have to have some infusion that is going to revitalize East Charlotte. Putting a public housing project in this area would deter the efforts of revitalizing and bringing business back to this part of town. Urban planners know that concentration of poor people create ghettos. They know that this is more than about creating ghettos-

**Marvin Thompson, 4933 Lawrence Orr Road** said I live in East Charlotte, and I have been disappointed in the services and the actions that have taken place since I retired from service. I was born in Charlotte, two parents, graduated high school, worked, went in service and served 20-years, came back and everything that we touched was illegal, improper, but the beat went on. We have a house that we built, never had an inspection, but yet we occupy it. The electricity was never passed. I asked the plumber; he said no the plumbing didn't pass. We had people out there looking at it; they all agreed that it was wrong but nobody did anything, so I'm wondering why weren't the laws enforced on our behalf. The building permits no, landlocked on Shamrock Drive, we have property up there we are trying to develop but we don't have access to it, but yet we pay taxes every year and we ask and somebody will say oh, we'll get back to you. It has been 35-years and they ain't got back yet. So, something is wrong somewhere. I would just like to know why the laws weren't enforced on our behalf.

**Ed Garber, 1401 Tarrington Avenue** said I am a lifelong east-sider. I just wanted to speak on behalf of this Parkside at Hickory Grover proposal for affordable housing or subsidized housing and I'm asking you to vote no on this. I know there has been a lot of talk about not separating all of these nine percent proposals and just putting in one lump vote because apparently there is a precedent that will be set if you don't do that. I guess my point is I don't know why you wouldn't set a precedent when you've established guidelines that determine whether you as a Council thinks something is good for our City or not. Now, based on the criteria you have already basically determined that based on the analysis that the staff has done. I heard some comments about specifically on a pod cast that District 5 does not want to do their part to solve the affordable housing problem in Charlotte. I took effect to that; the fact is we have naturally occurring affordable housing everywhere in our community number one.

Number two, there is no question that we have been inundated with subsidized housing and this is just more of it and there is more than 80-units. The developer could not give us a reason why we would want it in our community except that poor people need a place to live and that with more poor people there might be some money to have a grocery

store. Now, when I go to other parts of the City, like I went to Park Road Shopping Center the other day, I couldn't pick a restaurant but when I go over to Hickory Grover Road there are no restaurants. So, if we are going to add more poor people to a school that is Title One, where is the opportunities for those kids? The kids that are there now, they are going to add more kids to that and they are going to take the jobs that really don't exist over there and don't pay \$15 per hour minimum wage, and we are going to add more people to that.

**Liz Millsaps Haigler, 4117 Commonwealth Avenue** said we are coalition from 18 different housing organizations here in Charlotte. We are here, we are at your service and we want to work with LISC right now. We are comprised of the people affected and the people who advocate for them. We have multiple teams, including a data team and a score card. We would be happy to do the work, but we need the data that you have refused to give us. You promised we would have input; you are spending the \$50 million housing bond money before receiving our input and before putting together a community advocacy committee. You are spending on the same methods that have rarely created change and that have barely put a dent in this crisis. Why are you not funding innovative forms of housing, land trust, the pink-homeless bus, accessory dwelling units and tiny houses, green housing? There must be an allocation from the bond money for several forms of innovative housing. Housing and economic development go hand in hand; we want you to revamp our economic development policies because they reinforce the discriminatory practices of the past like red lining. Why aren't we talking about micro retail, tech incubators, the 25,000 products that can be made with our new industrial hemp crop. We want you to think outside the box and stop doing the same things that haven't worked and it starts right here with Item No. 15.; Parkside at Hickory Grove is slated for an area that is absolutely begging for gentrification. The developer has a D rating with the Better Business Bureau. It completely goes against Charlotte's housing locational policy, and it scores a 16.8 out of 60. Why would you approve any development that doesn't score at least half? Remove it from this funding list, take a closer in depth look at the rest of the projects, let us help you do it. Give us the data, give us the full authority to work with LISC. We are the housing justice coalition.

**Angie Forde, 418 Neill Ridge Road** said I am an advocate for affordable housing with Homeless Services Network, One Meck and the Housing Justice Coalition. Last August 27, 2019, this Council passed the housing framework; on page 12 this framework states to ensure community collaboration. The City will implement a process improvement to inform and seek community input on bond funding housing support requests, specifically including those who advocate for or are personally impacted by displacement and homelessness. We have been asking for involvement in this process ever since then, so far to no avail. On January 26, 2019, the Council passed the Housing Locational Policy which includes a scoring mechanism to rank proposed developments according to several criteria. We oppose this development as a way to ensure that housing dollars are spent in optimum ways. We have asked the City staff to share with us and the wide republic how that scoring mechanism works; this also has not happened, but we were pleased to see the scoring mechanism being used for the project being voted on tonight. Imagine our surprise when projects that scored very low according to your own system are now put forward to be approved for sending on to the State. I call to your attention particularly to the proposal for Parkside at Hickory Grove. It got a [inaudible] on proximity and 3.4 for diversity. We do not understand the reasoning process that would consider this a desirable development for an area that is already suffering the consequences of previous unwise housing strategies. So, we ask that the Council keep its word and institute the promised process improvement. Sooner rather than later we need community participation.

**James Lee, 3501 East Independence Boulevard** said I've changed since the last time you saw me. I'm a veteran and up until a few months ago I was homeless, living in the park in my community of Griertown, what the rest of Charlotte calls Grier Heights. When the housing framework talks about seeing community input from "those who advocate for or are personally impacted by this displacement and homelessness" it is talking about me and my neighbors. I represent the Stan Greenspoon Center on the Housing Justice Coalition; the Coalition meetings are open to the public and anyone who cares about

housing justice in the City. At the last Coalition meeting, there were 18 organizations represented by 25 people, and we really are a grassroots coalition. Since the City and LISC have not yet create the grassroots committee that was promised last August, we at the Greenspoon Center propose that you accept the Housing Justice Coalition as that group. If City staff will provide the details of spending proposals at least 45-days before Council votes on them, the Coalition will score those proposals so that all our voices can be heard and then you will meet the commitment that you made when each of you voted to approve the Housing Framework last August. Between you guys and these people, we are going to turn Charlotte upside down from 50 to number one. I see that happening Mayor with your leadership, with the Council and the people that is behind us, I see us doing this. We have to do this.

**Beth Morrison, 6704 Cord Wood Circle** said I am a resident of East Charlotte and live in the Hickory Ridge Neighborhood, not very far away from the Parkside at Hickory Grove. I'm also a part of the Housing Justice Coalition, and it has been great to be with a group of people so knowledgeable and so caring about our residents to have safe, healthy, affordable housing. Mayor Lyles, what you said earlier really struck a chord with me; the City needs to be able to pivot beyond just tradition. That is not what we are seeing here; we are not being innovative. We are spending potentially \$12 million of the \$50 million that this community came together in such a generous way to fund, and there are more innovative ways that we could do this, especially considering some of the proposed developments like Parkside at Hickory Grove.

I'm just wondering why Council has chosen not to apply its own Locational Policy to evaluate these developments and only put forward the best ones that actually meet that framework to the state for potential funding. We know that only maybe three or four will be approved, why not put our best foot forward and only submit the ones that would a benefit to our community? We really want you to involve us in this decision, give us time to be at the table and discuss how this is going to affect us in the community. Listen to us, take our expertise and make these decisions be really something more innovative than just recreating what has been done in the past.

**James Jackson, 800 Briar Creek Road** said I am Chairman of the newly created Park Community Development Corp. part of the Park family including the Park Church, Bishop Claude Alexander, and we are happy to have the Chairman of our broader Board, Deacon Cleveland Huntley here with us today. Deacon Huntley and Bishop Alexander felt like we had an opportunity to impact the findings from the Opportunity Task Force by creating this Community Development Corporation a couple years ago. We chose a mission that revolved around affordable housing, workforce development and healthy living because we felt like those were the three components relative to lifting particularly 18 to 24-year old and families and seniors up so we can move from 50 to number one. We decided as the Park CDC to partner with Laurel Street to build an 80-unit affordable housing complex on Beatties Ford Road as part of a broader master plan that we are working on. We are blessed at the Park to have time, talent and treasurers and one of treasurers is the fact that we do have land that we can leverage around this need in affordable housing. I'm pleased and proud that the City has decided to partner with faith based organizations such as ours to really tackle this issue of affordable housing, and we are blessed to have that property, because that property has some of the infrastructure of transportation and grocery stores and other amenities that would allow us to plug into something that can really make a positive difference. We would not be able to do that without the City having created this opportunity and we thank you for that.

**Tirzah Caffee, 8328 Early Bird Way** said I am the owner at the Historic Alexander Homestead located at the corner of Shamrock Drive and Sharon Amity Road. My business is in the direct vicinity of the proposed Parkside at Hickory Grove. My family has worked very closely with the City of Charlotte and our local Councilmember when we purchased the historic 1903 home. It sat vacant for 30-years bringing down the appearance of a very busy intersection in east Charlotte. Our family purchased the home in 2008 and spent close to \$2 million on renovations and we are now listed in the top 15 wedding venues in the whole State of North Carolina. I say all of this because the



presence of our business has greatly contributed to our amazing City as well as the revitalization we all want in East Charlotte.

Let me go on record stating that we are not against low income housing; we are a community full of low-income housing, many of which are privately operated, and we are currently working with a local housing complex to raise funds for their ministry just a mile from our business. Coming from a family full of business owners and developers I am fully aware that our protocol to developers must abide by when it comes to bringing a proposal to a community. I have grave concerns about the way the developer snuck a meeting and purposely only gave me a couple days' notice over the weekend. At some point after business hours on March 15, 2019, a letter was hand-delivered to my business. By the time I opened the mail on Tuesday, the meeting had already taken place. I'm aware that it is a City law to a minimum of seven-day notice be given as well as a start time of 6:00 p.m. or later. The developer planned a meeting at 5:30. In short, this developer ignored our City policy. If I had been legally notified I would have certainly been in attendance and made my concerns known at that time. How can you support a D-rated developer who some have labeled an absentee slum lord when from the very beginning he blatantly ignored our laws and our protocols? What message does this send to other developers who want to come into our fragile community?

**Bradley Caffee, 8328 Early Bird Way** said I am the co-owner of the Historic Alexander Homestead; I want to follow-up my beautiful wife's statement by sharing four reasons I think the location of Parkside at Hickory Grove is a terrible idea for our neighborhood. First of all, we have incredibly major traffic issues; over the past four-months out business monument alone has been struck and destroyed twice by car accidents. There are constant accidents at the intersection of Shamrock Drive and Sharon Amity Road and on numerous occasions Police have told us this one of the most dangerous intersections in all of East Charlotte. I personally have been a first responder to one of these accidents when a small bus full of preschoolers flipped at this intersection. I can still remember the face of the young boy who I pulled from the wreckage and hear his screams for his mother, and this is common place in this area.

Even a quick look at the incident report for this intersection will prove this danger as fact. To add 80 more units a block away from this intersection that is overused and dangerous I feel that is irresponsible. Secondly, we are very concerned about crime in our area. This neighborhood, just this week had a homicide, and we hear frequent gun shots at night and sometimes even during the day. This is our daily reality and our constant fear. Again, we feel this development will increase the overcrowding and will only turn up the pressure cooker that is our neighborhood.

Thirdly, we fear safety for the children at the Lawrence Orr Elementary School which will be right across the street. There is a problem at the school with young people partying and dealing drugs till the wee hours of the morning. There was a prostitute murder in the school parking lot and just this past year there was a shooting in the parking lot that caused that school to be locked down. Adding another couple hundred children and teenagers to an already congested and dangerous area, that is gas to a flame. Lastly, we do not have the infrastructure to meet the needs of these new units. Access to resources like grocery stores, hospitals, shopping, the bus stops are overloaded, this is not good in our area, and it is my understanding on a scale of zero to 10 this proposal ranks an abysmal one.

**Patrick Barber, 4728 Shamrock Drive** said I am also representing Onecia Barber, my wife; we own the property that is immediately beside the Parkside at Hickory Grove, so they would actually be building it in our yard. There are some facts I wanted to bring to your attention; we understand that the City has guidelines for community meetings held by developers including seven-days prior notice to the community and that meetings ought to start after 6:00 p.m. A notice letter of the Parkside at Hickory Grove community meeting was placed in our mailbox on Friday, which I did not see until Saturday due to the mail having ran that day. The letter was not sent by US Mail, and it was not dated. It was placed in my mailbox. The letter had the meeting starting at 5:30 p.m. we were unable to get to the meeting until after 5:30 p.m. We arrived at 5:45 p.m., and the



developer's presentation was over by the time we got there. We could have planned and potentially been there sooner if we had had notice of the meeting. I strongly believe that the City should not approve this affordable-housing proposal, and in effect reward a developer who broke the rules with a million-dollar payday or set a precedent whereby it is okay for a developer to bypass the community's voice.

Also, the location which the developer has proposed to build the development is being placed in a highly concentrated area that already experiences major traffic problems. I was personally told by the developer that the entrance to the housing project is required to be placed directly across the street to the entrance to the Lawrence Orr School, which not only had an accident I witnessed but ripped the railing off the front of the school. That is also where the shooting occurred, right from my porch where I was able to witness and see it. There are many days and nights when we hear sirens, gunshots, and we witness accidents right in that intersection. Coming out of my household there are many times when I am almost hit myself and my is almost hit, so we have to have to be extra cautious driving down that road that enters Shamrock. So, esthetics, morals, integrity, respect, all we ask for was that.

**Mimi Davis, 6500 Linda Lake Drive** said I am President of both Grove Park Neighborhood Association and also the East Charlotte Coalition of Neighborhoods, one of several coalitions that works in East Charlotte. East Charlotte has great potential, but it is not thriving. Our elementary schools are virtually all in the high poverty list, amenities are few, subsidized apartments are many. I'd like to speak against approving the project at Hickory Grove Road and Shamrock Drive by the South Carolina developer. I would like to discourage you from sending it to Raleigh for the nine percent tax credit. Housing can't be considered in isolation; few cities that attempt to segregate and condense the poor have been successful. There are a few plans in East Charlotte to increase job availability or upgrade transportation and abiding by our own locational policies is hiddenness affair. East Charlotte is allowed to struggle in order to adapt to the idea that impoverished families can only be housed on cheap land which of course only devalues it further. The it is the land in East Charlotte.

The last hope that is now talked about is that gentrification will act as a sort of retrofit to save us from early and unfortunate planning. This idea isn't shared by those who will lose their homes. There is considerable evidence that poor people living among the affluent do better. Poor children in more affluent schools do better. Upward mobility is served. In areas of concentrated poverty nobody has a way up. Schools are labeled as failing, teacher are stressed, it is brutal and unfair. I was a teacher in a high-poverty school; that is how I know. We seemed to be at the point of panic and desperation; however, the already lower income sections of town shouldn't carry the burden of this alone.

**John Rinehart, 6019 Johnnette Drive** said I was born and raised in Charlotte some 60 odd years. What I want to get at this is a bad location to put apartments. Number one, traffic coming down Hickory Grove Road dumping into Shamrock Drive is an issue. There is always wrecks there all the time. Number two, we don't have the infrastructure to support apartments in that area. Number three, I think I've got the biggest dog in the fight for the simple reason. I've got two pieces of property that is going to back up against this entire complex and on top of that we didn't receive the letter of notification from NHE until 3:15 p.m., and exactly at 1:50 p.m. the guy came to my house and delivered it to my wife. The reason I know the exact time is because I saw him on the ring doorbell on my house. We have the Ring doorbells; that is another thing, because of the traffic and because of the things that are happening, my wife's car was rummaged through for no reason at all. Although they did get some change and that is it. My rink doorbell picked up some guy walking through our yard with a flashlight from nowhere. We do not need this complex there now, and I'm sure that are other places in Charlotte that can support it. There are no grocery stores within walking distances at all in that general area.

**Deborah Dryden, 6529 Havenlock Place** said I am a 45-year resident of Hickory Grove. My husband and I built our house in 1973. I am President of the Ravenwood Neighborhood Association and Vice President of the East Charlotte Coalition of

Neighborhoods. I ask that you vote no to this \$1.7 million request from NHE Development for the Housing Trust Fund money for the Parkside at Hickory Grove. This 80-unit development on only five-acres calls for 61-units of 80% AMI and no market-value units included in this build. Our community is saturated with low-income housing where property management has not sustained the quality of life for its residents. The Housing Locational Policy put in place by this Council scored Parkside as a one for proximity and 4.5 for access as other people have pointed out.

I am also concerned for the families who will live on this property. Parking is inadequate for the two and three-bedroom units they are proposing. They are proposing 1.5 parking spaces per unit. The playground is small for small children, probably under the age of 10; it lacks space for the teens to play and a basketball court. There is no place for the children to ride their bikes; they are on a major street and would have to cross the street to possibly ride bikes at the elementary school. Additionally, struggling families impact our schools, our ability to attract amenities and sufficient jobs and doesn't help to improve the low AMI scores we are constantly experiencing. So, we seek at market-rate housing to raise the quality of life on the eastside, our children and families deserve quality schools, quality business opportunities and quality market housing.

**Chris Bakis, 6510 Idlebrook Lane** said on this one project, Parkside at Hickory Grove, many, many, many rules have been broken. We are on Agenda Item 15 and on Agenda Item 14 we were talking about City Council's rules. These rules have been broken; are you listening? Are you hearing? I watch the Sunday morning program Flash Point quite a bit, and I see Councilmember Egleston and Councilmember Bokhari on there quite a bit, when the subject of affordable housing comes up they talk about correctly, upward mobility. Upward mobility is the macro; upward mobility is what will truly help the poor. Affordable housing is a minute part of upward mobility; in my very humble opinion, in order for upward mobility to work you need to put in place what is lacking.

What is lacking in East Charlotte is economic opportunity, jobs; we need density of jobs. What is not lacking in East Charlotte is affordable housing. To put affordable housing inside of affordable housing is just going to create another Piedmont Courts. That is what is going to happen. What you need to do is since the rest of the City has the economic opportunity, has the economic development, that is where you put the affordable housing, because what is lacking there is affordable housing. What is not there you put there, and again, they are breaking the rules and remember we just voted on rules here. Listen to the people, open you ears and put it this way; if you are going to vote all of this in one block that you shouldn't have, you are going to have to vote no. You are duty bound to vote no on this whole thing because you put it all in one block because the rules are broken. If you can take it out great, I do not think the Mayor has line item vetoes so you should put the vote off and then take it out, but you should vote no.

**Anglea Ambrose, 1933 Pegram Street** said I just want to say I'm a strong advocate for affordable housing, and I can assure you tonight if I smell NIMBY, I would not be here. This development does not make sense; it is just not a smart development, and I think it is time that Charlotte starts to lead on innovation. We need to be out there talking about what is best for these communities, and this development doesn't make sense. It does not have any economic development to it. It is just not a good fit for this area, and I'm a strong advocate for affordable housing, but the reality of it is we have got to look at these developments and figure out what makes sense.

I was told that you are not voting on this development tonight, but it should go with a strong letter to the State that we who represent Charlotte do not feel good about this development. We don't want it to pass, because it simply does not make sense. The other thing that I want to throw out at the Council tonight. We need to really think about what our best practices are. We really need to look at displacement and talk about when our citizens come back to you guys and says you know what, best practices are to buy 50-unit buildings for displacement. You guys need to really reach out to the Housing Trust Coalition, and we are coming together, grassroots and talking about this thing. Fifty-unit buildings is not best practices for displacement and especially when it comes to people who look like me, African American. That is a not a solvable thing but again, I just

want us to take a hard look at how we are using Housing Trust Fund dollars. When we are told something is best practices, we need to ask questions. Is that New York; is that Miami? We need to think about what is best for Charlotte. We are here, and we are willing to help you guys, and I think it is time that you reach out to the community because you have that support, and we are on the street. I would like to say we are in the weeds of this housing thing, so take a listen to us.

Motion was made by Councilmember Newton, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, to deny Parkside at Hickory Grove, \$1,750,000 and approve Housing Trust Fund allocations for the following multi-family developments (contingent upon their receiving nine percent tax credits from the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency): Abbington Westside, \$1,157,500; Brookwood Apartments, \$1,525,000; Connelly Creek Apartments, \$1,996,500; Mayfield at Sugaree, \$1,750,000; Rosewood Commons II, \$520,000; Sugar Creek Greene, \$1,368,000, and The Park Seniors, \$1,360,000.

**Councilmember Mitchell** said is the developer here? Mr. Kass, thank you for being here. There were a couple of complaints you heard about the communication process and not engaging the citizens, and I think we've always had a practice here of not rewarding bad behavior. Can you explain to us the lack of timely communication to the residents?

**Joseph Kass, Developer** said yes, there were complaints at the public meeting about that as well. We did try to get a public meeting in; the Charlotte Housing Trust Fund process is a multi-month process, and we wanted to get a community meeting in before a certain date that they wanted us to have that on the schedule, so it was last minute. We know that, and we admit that. We did try to reach out to everyone; everyone we gave letters to, everyone we dropped off letters to; everyone we talked to at the community meeting had my personal e-mail, my personal phone number, contact information, our website. I received 15 to 20 e-mails after the meeting, and 50 to 60 people attended the meeting; we had a sign-in sheet.

At the meeting, I apologized for the late notice of the meeting, and if anybody wanted additional meetings we offered to have as many additional meetings as people would like. There was an emphatic no to additional meetings. Any e-mails I have received I have responded to all of them attempting to address. Obviously, we can't address every concern that everybody has but attempting to answer questions when we can. I received a handful of phone calls and again responded to all phone calls we received. We've tried to be available. I would categorize mostly the comments and feedback we've received as not so much questions and clarifications; it was more just opposition.

Mr. Mitchell said why was it an issue of doing it in a timely fashion?

Mr. Kass said really just unaware because we don't have to pursue a rezoning, and so we were confused that we needed to have that public meeting on a certain schedule with the Housing Trust Fund.

Mr. Mitchell said is this your first affordable housing project in Charlotte?

Mr. Kass said in Charlotte, yes.

Mr. Mitchell said what is your history sir of affordable housing project?

Mr. Kass said my company has developed a dozen different affordable housing projects across South Carolina and Virginia, and we are partnered with another company based out of Virginia and Boston that has developed literally hundreds of affordable housing all over the east coast, Florida, Georgia, etc.

My company specifically manages 4,000 market-rate units, another couple thousand affordable units again, across South Carolina and North Carolina. We work with a general contractor that is part of our development team that has built numerous market-rate

developments in South Carolina and North Carolina and here in Charlotte and has built numerous affordable developments in South Carolina

Mr. Mitchell said so, your experienced in market rate, you have just articulated to us so, why not add some market rates at this location?

Mr. Kass said we had an appraisal and a market study and a general feasibility analysis, and although we can achieve rents approaching market rate, we are going to have 80% AMI units. We are going to do a mixed income. It is not all going to be at one AMI; we are going to have some at every level, and although we are going to go up to 80% AMI and that approaches market rate for that area. We will not have true unregulated market rate units in the development, and that is mostly just from a North Carolina Housing Financing point of view.

To get into the weeds, if you pursue federal tax credits for every unit you have that is market that is not at least 80% AMI or below affordable, it is actually trickier to come up with first mortgage proceeds versus tax credits so it gets into the weeds but financially to make it get it out of the ground to make it work and to make it pencil out, there will be a mixture of incomes from 30% up to 80% but no unregulated market rate units.

Mr. Mitchell said so, the feedback you received at the meeting with 50 to 60 people there and it was clearly the citizens were not supporting of this project; you did not think to come up with another option at that site?

Mr. Kass said at that site there are certain things that will work and certain things that will not work and certain things that will pencil out and not pencil out, and ultimately before the meeting and then taking in the public comments into consideration, building less units on that site is not feasible. You have to have enough units to have scale to make anything work, and the zoning caps it out I believe at 91-units. It is 5.32 acres zoned 17 units per acre.

So, you want to approach that for economies of scale, so that is the number of units, that is why that is determined. Then, the funding sources, both Charlotte Housing Trust Fund, North Carolina Housing Finance Agency, they have a rental production program funding source. They have a workforce housing funding source. All of those funding sources have rules and when you combine all the rules and go after the federal tax credits you start drawing the diagram of what works and what we've come up for a proposal for this site is what works if that answers your question.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said my questions is for our City Attorney, Mr. Baker. Several residents who spoke said that they had gotten a notice of the meeting just a few hours before the meeting, and it was dropped off in their mailbox. What are the rules around legal requirement for notices of this type of development and has he violated that?

**Patrick Baker, City Attorney** said I'm not specifically aware of legal requirements; I know that is the policy that you have in place, and I haven't called the Housing Finance Agency to find out what are the ramifications, but it is my understanding that there are expectations that have been put out there that don't appear to have been met here.

Ms. Ajmera said it looks like that is a North Carolina Housing Financing Agency requirement.

Mr. Baker said I'm not sure if they are their requirements; I know they are your requirements, but I don't know if the failure to provide 48-hours' notice or whatever that notice is would necessarily disqualify you from the State perspective. I can find that out. I'm just not sure.

Ms. Ajmera said it looks like we have violated our own rules here, not necessarily Council but the developer had violated the rules when it comes to noticing our residents if there is a development nearby. I would like to understand what those rules are that has been set by Council, and what is the proper notification; is it by mail or is by hand-delivery?



Whatever it is, I think we need to understand that better, because citizens are very important throughout this process and if many of them did not get an opportunity to be engaged in this process we missed out on a very important opportunity to seek their input. I certainly don't support that; I think we've got to have residents very involved, and so many have invested so much time in uplifting our neighborhoods. With that I would support Mr. Newton's motion to separate this specific development from the combined package.

**Councilmember Eiselt** said my questions are a little bit different for staff; I'll be honest that I was really surprised by the fact that the locational policy was applied nine percent deals, because the Council approved the locational policy and said that we would not apply them to nine percent deals. Could you first address that?

**Pam Wideman, Director of Housing and Neighborhood Services** said you are absolutely correct; that is the point of confusion. The nine percent deals and your locational policy that you recently approved, the locational policy does not apply to the nine percent deals. That information was included on the slides that you all received for information only, because several Councilmembers had asked us what if the locational policy were applied, but you are correct and the policy that was approved, the locational policy does not apply to nine percent deals, because we know we are only going to get up to three or four of those, and based on the State's scoring system they have taken care of many of the things that you guys are worried about from a locational perspective.

Ms. Eiselt said with that in mind, I feel you can't put the paste back in the tube. It did get applied to all of our nine percent deals, and to be honest with the community, I think we had a good policy. This has gotten very confusing, and so this isn't specifically for this deal; this is for all of our nine percent deals, because we said in our locational policy they wouldn't apply to nine percent deals, and we also said that the nine percent deals wouldn't go through LISC.

So, to the point about community involvement, you are exactly right, but we had said that LISC essentially isn't going to start looking at four percent deals until May, so that community input piece we've committed to that. So, that is a separate issue. That said the reason we agreed that nine percent deals wouldn't apply was because the state has their own criteria, so in theory if there is not a grocery store nearby this shouldn't pass, right.

Ms. Wideman said you are correct; it won't score well if there is not a grocery store.

Ms. Eiselt said so, why are we including it in that packet?

Ms. Wideman said again, the locational policy was not applied; it was included for information purposes. If I had to do that again Ms. Eiselt, we would not have put that information on the slide, because it is irrelevant. We talked about it in Committee; Ms. Mayfield particularly pointed it out; so, the locational policy was not applied. It was included on the slide though.

Ms. Eiselt said the issue that I raised when we passed the locational policy was what are we going to do with that information; are we looking at each one of those categories individually? Is locational score more important than access? We never really resolved that and so, we never said let's look at the point total overall, anything below X number of points we move forward, anything below we don't and I personally, with regards to nine percent deals, because it did get scored, I personally am not comfortable with the way we are doing this and I would ask Mr. Newton; and we have a different perspective, I know he is the District Representative, and I agree on a one off deal this one doesn't seem to be fair to the community the way the process ran, and we are not even sure if it followed our policy, but I think we've got to have a policy for nine percent deals, and it is going to be very clear, does the locational policy apply or not? Maybe we decide it should have, but regardless we don't have any benchmarks. We don't have any threshold, so I would ask Mr. Newton if you would consider a substitute motion or to replace the motion to defer this and to have a policy to take the next two weeks, bring it back to our next Business

meeting and have a policy that says we either apply locational policy to nine percent or we don't.

**Mayor Lyles** said let me just say something; I think clearly there isn't agreement on this project and you know guys I'm the queen of affordable housing, but I would say to the developer, as well as to the neighborhood, this doesn't just smell right for me. You know you just have to do that sometimes, so I'm going to say this. Mr. Newton made a motion to approve with no endorsement. I think it is better to say and I know what Ms. Eiselt has said is accurate; we've got to get this thing straightened out on the policy and location for all deals whether we send them through the LISC process just like everybody else with community engagement and all of that, but Mr. Newton I would suggest that we do need the policy discussion.

I would suggest that we move forward with everything except this project and come back in a couple weeks. We talk about being innovative and learning; let's do a case study and see what happened here. I think that is probably the best way to do something like this, review what we did, figure out what of it worked and if it did we can still apply at some point. Mr. Newton, if you would accept the idea of not moving with no endorsement but not moving forward, let us come back. I would like to see a process review and come back and see how this works so that we can do it. It is more than just the policy; it is about what are our standards and did we meet them all and not having sufficient information, especially since this is the only group down here? It makes sense something went arie, and we need to go back and look at that.

**Councilmember Phipps** said out of the eight projects that we have, how many went through a rezoning, and how many are by right development?

Ms. Wideman said Mr. Phipps, if I can remember correctly, the one that went through rezoning was Mayfield at Sugaree. That rezoning will be approved, which is indicated on your RCA on April 22, 2019. You all had the public hearing at your last rezoning meeting.

Mr. Phipps said so, the other ones were already zoned multifamily?

Ms. Wideman said I don't remember that off the top of head.

Mr. Phipps said is Parkside already zoned multifamily?

Ms. Wideman said it is zoned correctly, it did not have to go through a rezoning.

Mr. Phipps said so even if they don't get this approval for this low-income housing tax credit, they could still put multifamily on it if they wanted to, right?

Ms. Wideman said under the current zoning they could still do multifamily, so they could still have apartments there.

Mayor Lyles said penciling it out is what the developer said.

**Councilmember Mayfield** said two questions and it goes back to the motion because I wasn't following what your amendment potentially was. Is the amendment to approve what is moved to deny this one item? Are we saying we are pulling this one project out in order for it to be a part of a separate vote? I wasn't clear what you were trying to infer with your amendment to the amendment.

Mayor Lyles said I wrote down that Mr. Newton said he would have a motion to approve the project list without an endorsement of the project at Parkside. I think endorsement means that you just say you don't like it or no endorsement to send it forward. What I'm suggesting is that we remove that from the list and have a motion to approve all the others. My suggestion was that we then go back and review what happened. So, it was just a lot of things that we could learn from this.

Ms. Mayfield said for me just move to deny that one, because there is a number of concerns, but for staff as you move forward with these conversations and there are multiple conversations of who reviews all of this. If there is a company that already has a track record of being identified as not being a good property owner, we are already having concerns in the community regarding slum lords and the impact of slum lords. So, if any developer that comes into the community I'm not sure where staff does the basics. The simple google search for anyone who comes before us before even moving through the steps, because if you are right next door and there is already multiple concerns that you can easily pull on line, which I have during the time of conversations, there is a disconnect as well in what we are looking at as far as criteria.

There are multiple concerns that were brought up tonight; there is a challenge in the fact that we are presenting all of it together, all the requests under one motion, and I also heard a conversation or a potential suggestion if we were to defer it and come back, Ms. Wideman, I need to hear from you if there was a deferral what, if any impact there would be, and also if we were to pull one item out and either move that item as a deferral and/or deny what would the impact be.

Ms. Wideman said my recommendation would be you could approve the slate, do exactly what Mr. Newton suggested in his motion, you could approve the slate of seven, take this one out, and you could either not approve it tonight and give them an opportunity to come back next year to compete or in a subsequent round or you could defer for two weeks as has been pointed out as well. What I will say is that if you defer you would need to either vote this particular one up or down on or before May 10, 2019 so the developer would have some direction.

Ms. Mayfield said so, the other part of that conversation, because again, I've already shared where I stand on this particular project, at some point we have to have a real conversation on that of which we started the conversation, and we were going to be getting an update on the specifics of the language moving forward so, in the new Committee structure I'm hoping that is at the fore front, because it is in that language that we have our protection for our community, because you and I had conversation and I shared that I was hearing from other developers that things that were happening, because our neighbor, South Carolina, has created stricter rules. So, now we are seeing development right across, because our language was going through a redefining. There is a challenge in that. There has to be language where in actuality a project like this shouldn't have even come before Council because of the challenges that they already have on other community because then we are openly going into this three to five-years however many years it is, when there are complaints and concerns, and we are going to say it is a private business, and we don't have as much authority in it. We love to say the state has their rules and you have greater standards, but the state's language of which Mr. Newton, I'm hoping is going to speak to it, because he's done some research. We have a lot more flexibility through political will versus political ability regarding the interpretation of the state language than we utilized in previous years.

Mayor Lyles said I wanted to make sure Mr. Newton, I think this is your motion and your turn to speak, and I wasn't clear without endorsement if that meant just sending it forward but just no comment on it. I don't know what that motion means for endorsement.

Ms. Wideman said Madam Mayor, if I could help you, you guys could if you think this is what Mr. Newton is getting to. You could vote on all seven of these with the exception of the Parkside At Hickory; so, you could send seven up for consideration and decide not to send this one up or you could vote on the seven tonight and ask that this one come back at your April 22, 2019 meeting. It is totally your call.

Mayor Lyles said I wouldn't want it to come back until we figured out what happened. That to me is an open question.

Mr. Newton said I want to start by saying I think it is important that we understand this process and our role. I contacted the NCHFA last week to ask questions about that, because I think there was a lot of confusion. I actually sent an e-mail too that broke this down, attaching their response to me. I just want to recite that real quick; this is from the

Director of Rental Investment, the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency. He said “there are no rules or policy of the NCHFA, which dictate nor steer whether a local government does or does not provide a commitment of funds to a nine percent housing credit application. Those decisions are made entirely by the local government. NCHFA has no role in that process or the decisions that are made.”

Basically, what they are saying and what they expressed to me was that this is up to us; we have unlimited autonomy in this instance. They confirmed to me that they neither review the decisions of a local government nor direct it. So, ultimately, I had asked at one point, I said well, do other municipalities, because I think we’ve had some confusion with this because it seems as though over the years these have all gone through. So, I asked have other municipalities ever pulled one of these? They said yes; it happens, and I said why? They said we don’t know. The reason is that they don’t ask, because their rules did not apply. Their rules apply to developers and for us to be looking at the QAP and saying that somehow there are rules that govern us from the QAP or we otherwise need to abide by, we are not doing our jobs. I’m clarifying the process is what I’m doing, because I think there is a lot of confusion and I’m getting to an even more valid point.

Ms. Eiselt said I don’t think that is going to be less confusion tonight thought. We need the time to have the fuller discussion.

Mr. Newton said I think we can make our decision tonight, so anyhow I think it is important, here me out here, because I think we don’t understand that we have the power to make a very well-informed decision here tonight. I talked to the City Attorney earlier today and I’ve spoken to him last week and the folks in the City Attorney’s office. We have been told that the Housing Locational Policy; it is not excluded. We aren’t prevented from looking at it; it is exempt from nine percent deals.

There is a difference between exclusion and exemptions. Exemptions mean that we are not required to look at it, but if we want to we can. So, basically, we can choose to look at it or we can choose to ignore it, and I would ask for some clarity from our City Attorney on this. We had a conversation attorney to attorney, and we talked about what the meaning of the word exemption is. That is what it is. We can actually consider our Locational Policy tonight in this context and not approve this particular deal based upon that, from what we’ve heard from the NCHFA or based upon quite frankly, any number of items. Mr. Attorney, if you would please comment on that.

Mr. Baker said that was my understanding of our conversation that there was more than just the Locational Policy; there were other issues related to this particular developer as well. So, from my perspective in terms of what I’ve heard, I did see the one on the Locational Policy, but I’ve also heard and I think you’ve heard tonight other issues as it relates to this particular development. It is beyond just you can’t consider it, therefore move forward. You have that discretion if you so choose to exercise it to look at this particular development for a mired of reasons including the scores that were produced in front of you.

Mr. Newton said so we can look at our Housing Locational Policy in making a decision on this particular or any of these nine percent deals.

Mr. Baker said ultimately, it is your choice; you may want to clarify that if you are saying you are exempting it even if it is not excluded. I could see once you start parsing the words it may not be as clear as you would like it to be. If you are intending to not consider it at all you may want to choose a different term.

Mr. Newton said I would agree with Ms. Eiselt that we need to flush out this policy. We need to have criteria but to assume right now that we don’t have sufficient information, our own data, right that we passed two months ago, to make a decision in this particular context I think just isn’t accurate. I had some questions for the developer. Why did you think this was a good location for Parkside at Hickory Grov,e right there at the epicenter of three large traffic-congested thoroughfares?



Mr. Kass said it did score a perfect 60 out of 60 with the State; that was one thing that drew us to it. As you mentioned, Charlotte has a scoring system. The State also has a scoring system; this scored a perfect score with the State. Those scores were published a couple weeks ago. We scored it in advance and knew that it would score perfectly, so, that was one thing that drew us. Also, driving around the neighborhood, it is a very nice neighborhood. I like the neighborhood; I drove my investors around the neighborhood, they also really like it. I think you get a feel when you drive around a neighborhood. I've driven around other neighborhoods in Charlotte, and frankly, I would not drive my investors through, so I like this neighborhood. There are several grocery stores within a mile or mile and a half; so, that is another thing that drew us to it. It has three pharmacies, two doctors all within a mile or mile and a half, several dollar stores. It has a library right down the road. It has Shamrock Community Center right up the road, so there is a lot of public amenities.

Mr. Newton said you had mentioned this penciled out for you. What does that mean?

Mr. Kass said affordable housing is very difficult to build in general.

Mr. Newton said it is the money to make it work. I will move to the question tonight and ask that we vote on this. I had used the words "not endorsing," because that is precisely what we do with these. We either make a commitment for financing, which is an endorsement or not, and I really think that is important language, because the thing is that to endorse a project like I think would be horrible. It would set a terrible precedent for us, so I'm ready to move forward.

**Councilmember Driggs** said I think since we are having this discussion, it is worth explaining to you why we are looking at this so hard. Why did we get to this place where we are considering this? I would just like to frame the conversation a little bit and point out we have a housing crisis in Charlotte. It was recognized a couple of years ago. We have 20,000 or 30,000 units, and this Council has committed to try to address that. So, it is difficult to make headway, because through gentrification and other things that number actually grows.

What we have in the nine percent deals is a funding source that pays for 70% of any project that qualifies, and that is about \$7 million; so, if we pass up the opportunity to do one of these deals in the midst of all of our attempts to raise money and fund housing and address this need, we are walking away from \$7 million. Either this would get approved and it would be worth \$7 million, or it wouldn't get approved, and it didn't happen. I'm just telling you that is the reason that this Council not long ago adopted a policy that said we are not going to limit ourselves by applying our location policy to nine percent deals. They are too valuable. There is too much that we can do at \$1,750,000; we are paying a little over \$20,000 per unit out of our Trust Fund. When we go to other structures it costs a lot more. So, what is drawing us to this is the fact that this is very responsive to what it is we are trying to do, and it involves a lot of money that comes from some place other than our local taxpayers. I'm just explaining that to you so that you know why we would persist or even talk about it in the face of what you've said.

District 5 has suffered from its own perception of neglect; it is an area that we would not want to offend by appearing to be insensitive to your needs but the motivation for us to consider this is very strong just because of our financial constraints and the desire to create housing. So, that is the context. I am interested to know, there was the suggestion that this is not a good manager; does anybody on staff have a comment about that? Do we have anything objective to substantiate a suggestion like that?

Ms. Wideman said Mr. Driggs, we do not have anything to substantiate those accusations. What I will remind you of thought is that these deals, if they are approved, they are inspected at least once per year by the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency. I would also remind you that the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency, in order to approve, they also look at the developer's track record. They too, do not want to engage in a development like this with a bad developer if you will. So, all of that would be looked at

before it would be awarded. So, if there is some issue that would prohibit the award of the development.

Mr. Driggs said I guess I would just say the location issue in my mind is something that we've already talked about and decided. There have also been suggestions of irregularities in the way this was done. They may merit our consideration; on that basis, I would go along with a deferral, but I just urge us to be really cautious about starting to pick and choose on nine percent deals. They are too valuable.

Mr. Phipps said much has been said around the dais about the proximity score of a one. We have a couple other deals that scored a two; is that a good score? Two is better than one, but who is to say that these others that scored low in proximity are worthy if we are going to apply this benchmark of not looking at the locational policy for this nine percent?

Mayor Lyles said I think there are various reasons that people are looking at this, and for some it is the locational policy; it is not the overriding factor for some it is the other things in the process. You have to vote on what you believe, and how you come to rationalize your decision, but it isn't the same rationalization as the locational policy.

Mr. Phipps said on at least one of these two percent the meeting protocols were such that they were rushed and not done in accordance with what we would expect also. I came to a meeting in the middle of the day on a Friday, and I was the only one there. So, if we are going to apply those kinds of standards then we have others on here that might be subject to it as well.

Mayor Lyles said I understand that, and I think that we can make a motion about any of those that we choose to.

Ms. Mayfield said personally as much as I love my colleague and my former Vice Chair of Housing and Neighborhood Development. There is a conversation that I'm going to challenge a little regarding this idea of just because we have the money there it should be spent. We denied a project not too long ago over in Steele Creek because of the construction and the warehouse and the environment; so, this idea well, poor people can stay anywhere as long as someone is willing to build it. That is part of what I heard. I need us to go back and remember, and anyone who has lived in Charlotte for more than two years, that is not for a clap. I need us to make sure that you are holding us accountable for the right thing, because Brookhill, West Wood, Double Oaks, Piedmont Courts all of them were government funded buildings that we didn't own that became slum living that government then after that 30-years, 15-years or whatever it was, those were sold. They became high end market rate products, so that same investment that was made where we had slum lords who weren't taking care- We can't tract mold until we can get some legislative authority on it. So, we have horrific conditions as it is; so, to say well, they should be able to pull this money.

What I'm hoping that we figure out is on the front end instead of us looking at all applications go forward, I agree with my colleague, there has to be a criteria on our end so that we are submitting the best of the best so that in a decade or less we are not having the same conversation that we are having regarding Arbor Glenn and West Wood, what once was West Wood Apartments, where I now have \$500,000 homes that are being built right next to a \$60,000 home. The only way we fix that is if we make better choices. The only way we get to make better choices is if staff brings us better choices. We have now moved into a new direction where it is not going to be scrutinized in Committee because we brought an outside non-profit to help scrub and help us weed through this. I personally, I've already said it, and I'm going to continue to challenge it. I have my concerns regarding the relationship with LISC, the relationship with the City of Charlotte, the relationship with tax dollars when they are a non-profit organization and are not held accountable to the community. I'm hoping that what we are hearing and what we are paying attention to is we are not setting ourselves up where within less than a decade what-ever Council is sitting around this dais is having to try to fix the mistakes that we are trying to fix from previous Councils, because we thought it was such a great idea and we didn't ask the right questions. There was just a gentrification town hall that was hosted in Brooklyn

where they are highlighting even Washington has used Ohio's language to create a set rent control. Now, we are dealing with the State; are we able to do that? I don't know, because for seven-years, I've asked the question that some of my colleagues have asked and staff has given me one response that is in direct contradiction to other language that we find out later. Hindsight is always 20/20, but the reality is we get to do something transformational, and I'm concerned about the direction we are going in, because we are no longer leading it. When I say we, I'm talking about the City of Charlotte and your Council, which is why you are having this long conversation around the dais with the community engaged, because what was presented was this information without the background, and the challenges and then the community brings challenges. We are like wait a minute; so, we have to take this into consideration, but when I hear my colleagues say well, let's not lose the money. All money ain't good money and dirty money ain't going to do nothing but keep you dirty. I'm hoping we can figure out something different. I've already said that I support Mr. Newton's recommendation, the language, even though in legal terms I get that you want to stay there. In our terms it will be approve or denied.

Mr. Newton said deny, so let's move to the question.

Mayor Lyles said we have a motion on the floor to approve those with the exception of Parkside at Hickory Grove, moving forward with no endorsement.

Mr. Driggs said Mayor, I don't understand "no endorsement"; what are you talking about?

Mr. Newton said deny.

Mayor Lyles said deny.

Mr. Driggs said you deny the Housing Trust Fund funding that is necessary for the State to even take seriously?

Ms. Mayfield said for this one project yes and that received a second.

Mr. Driggs said I just want to be clear we are talking about denying it.

The vote was taken on the motion and was recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Eiselt, Egleston, Harlow, Mayfield, Mitchell, Newton, and Winston

NAYS: Councilmembers Driggs and Phipps.

Mayor Lyles said one of the questions that I think we have is while we have had this nine percent come through with our list I'm not so sure that we were prepared in a way, or that people asked for things that the full Council wasn't aware of. We've got to get this down to a Councilmember that asks for something doesn't mean that it should go to everyone, but it should not be included in our Council action without some review by the Council to say this is what our decision making is.

The next thing that I think is when you look at these overall, if we have just approved the policy on location, I thought it did not apply. It certainly made the conversation very convoluted and as well if that is what we want to do we ought to have a discussion around it as well as I think this would be a good one to just kind of go through and pencil in where we did things that we should think about changing or doing it differently. I really do believe that we are going to have a stronger process as a result for the review of the financial and our policies and that might be a different point of view for everyone else, but I believe that we can make these decisions in the right way with community involvement.

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**BUSINESS**

**ITEM NO. 16: NOMINATIONS TO THE BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The following nominations were made for one appointment for a partial term recommended by the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance beginning immediately and ending April 28, 2020:

At the time of this meeting, no recommendation has been received.

The following nomination was made for one appointment for a three-year term recommended by the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance beginning May 1, 2019 and ending April 28, 2022.

The Charlotte Regional Business Alliance has recommended Tonia M. Woodbury for reappointment.

- Tonia M. Woodbury, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Driggs, Egleston, Eiselt, Harlow, Mayfield, Mitchell, Newton, Phipps, and Winston

Motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell, seconded by Councilmember Eiselt, and carried unanimously to reappoint Tonia Woodbury.

Ms. Woodbury was reappointed.

The following nominations were made for one appointment for a three-year term recommended by the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance beginning May 1, 2019 and ending April 28, 2022:

- Emma Allen, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera and Winston
- Victoria G. Watlington, nominated by Councilmembers Driggs, Egleston, Eiselt, Harlow, Newton, and Phipps.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell, seconded by Councilmember Eiselt, and carried unanimously to reappoint Ms. Watlington.

Ms. Watlington was reappointed.

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**ITEM NO. 17: NOMINATIONS TO THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVISORY BOARD**

The following nominations were made for one appointment for a partial term beginning immediately and ending September 21, 2019, followed by a three-year term beginning September 22, 2019 and ending September 21, 2022:

- Melba Evans, nominated by Councilmember Ajmera
- Gerard Littlejohn, nominated by Councilmembers Driggs, Egleston, Eiselt, Harlow, Mitchell, Phipps, and Winston
- Latrisha Lowery-Johnson, nominated by Councilmembers Mayfield and Newton

Motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell, seconded by Councilmember Eiselt, and carried unanimously to appoint Gerard Littlejohn.

Mr. Littlejohn was appointed

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**ITEM NO. 18: NOMINATIONS TO KEEP CHARLOTTE BEAUTIFUL**

The following nominations were made for one appointment for a partial term beginning immediately and ending June 30, 2019, followed by a three-year term beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2022 and for one appointment for a partial term beginning immediately and ending June 30, 2021.

- Sharon Geter, nominated by Councilmember Harlow
- Iris Hudson, nominated by Councilmembers Driggs, Egleston, Eiselt, Mitchell, Phipps, and Winston
- Leigh Lynch, nominated by Councilmembers Driggs, Egleston, Eiselt, Mitchell, Phipps, and Winston
- Elyas Mohammed, nominated by Councilmember Ajmera
- Linh Quach, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Mayfield and Newton
- Sharrone Robinson, nominated by Councilmembers Mayfield and Newton
- Angela Shealy, nominated by Councilmember Harlow

Motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell, seconded by Councilmember Eiselt, and carried unanimously to Ms. Hudson and Ms. Lynch.

Ms. Hudson and Ms. Lynch were appointed.

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**ITEM NO. 19: NOMINATIONS TO NEIGHBORHOOD MATCHING GRANTS FUND**

The following nominations were made for one appointment recommended by the City Manager for a two-year term beginning April 16, 2019 and ending April 15, 2021:

The City Manager recommended Sarah M. Hazel be reappointed.

- Sarah Hazel, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Driggs, Egleston, Eiselt, Harlow, Mayfield, Mitchell, Newton, Phipps and Winston.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell, seconded by Councilmember Eiselt, and carried unanimously to reappoint Sarah Hazel.

Sarah Hazel was reappointed.

The following nominations were made for one appointment for a Business Representative for a two-year term beginning April 16, 2019 and ending April 15, 2021:

- Jamal Cook, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Driggs, Egleston, Eiselt, Harlow Mayfield, Mitchell, Newton, Phipps and Winston.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell, seconded by Councilmember Eiselt, and carried unanimously to reappoint Jamal Cook.

Mr. Cook was reappointed.

The following nominations were made for one appointment for a Neighborhood Representative for a two-year term beginning April 16, 2019 and ending April 15, 2021:

- Mark Abruzino, nominated by Councilmember Driggs
- Diane Langevin, Nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Egleston, Eiselt, Mitchell, Newton, Phipps, and Winston.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell, seconded by Councilmember Eiselt, and carried unanimously to appoint Diane Langevin.

Ms. Langevin was appointed.

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## ITEM NO. 20: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL TOPICS

**Councilmember Egleston** said I want to thank Cheyenne Winston. Cheyenne is painting me a new painting for my office. Thank you, Cheyenne.

**Councilmember Harlow** said I'm asking the community to come out on Thursday at Reeder Memorial Baptist Church; I will be on a panel with the Tax Assessor, Ken Joyner from Mecklenburg county as we continue to have conversations around various tax relief programs that the City and County are offering, particularly for senior citizens, so please join us at 6:00 p.m. Reeder Memorial Baptist Church, 3725 Beatties Ford Road.

**Mayor Lyles** said we lost T. J. Ready in this Arts Community, and it has been a little bit of time, but he was truly one of those people involved in civil rights and used arts and culture as a part of this. To his family, I say he had a well-lived life, and we regret that he is no longer with us.

I have a request of the City Manager; I think that we've been having some conversations about getting ready for the budget. I was wondering if we should actually have a conversation specifically about the outside agencies and the arts and culture that we currently budget for but often we don't put it in one place. We have the Arts and Science Counsel at \$2 million, but we don't talk about our debt financing and our agreements that lock us in to some consistent long-term efforts; so, I would like to see all of that packaged together. We had the Budget Workshop, and it was kind of like we had all these agencies that we talk about, and I'm not so sure that everybody understands how much we invest in that effort as we are going forward, and as I said, the County Manager expects the polling on the quarter-cent sales tax referendum to be ready about mid-month. So, I guess we will have that information presented to us as well by the County staff.

**Councilmember Mitchell** said my next Town Hall Meeting will be Tuesday, April 30, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. here in the Chamber. The title is Where Access Meets Opportunities. It will be three-fold: one to hear from the top 12 developers, what new construction projects are in Charlotte; secondly talk about out entrepreneurship; and thirdly, how do we address the upward mobility challenge, and what are we doing to address that issue? Please come; that is Tuesday, April 30, 2019 at 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. here in the Chamber. RSVP to Jocella Palmer.

**Councilmember Mayfield** said for our long-time activist and many leaders in the community that know of, worked with, learned from and trained with Ms. Ella Tally, who was one of our greatest leaders in this community and who I had the honor of calling family, thanks to me picking an amazing mate to marry. I want to share that Ms. Tally did pass yesterday morning, and the family will be sending out information. She was an Eastern Star. If you every go to the Board of Elections and look at the plaque on the wall, you will see her name because she was one of the original along with Mary Clens, Ms. Teresa Elder, and Ms. Sarah Stevens to help move this City forward, and they were voices to be reckoned with and the reason women own property today is because of these amazing women, because there was a time that women could not own property here in Charlotte. It is with a heavy heart that I say that she will be missed, but for those who I have not contacted, if you reach out to my office [Imayfield@charlottenc.gov](mailto:Imayfield@charlottenc.gov) I will make sure that you have the homecoming information for this upcoming weekend.

**Councilmember Phipps** said yesterday, I had the opportunity to attend the Regional Optimist International Oratorical Contest at the Morrison Regional Library, and we had seven contestants giving great speeches. The theme question was Is There a Fine Line

Between Optimism and Reality? Our first-place winners we had Mr. Phillip Brown representing the Hidden Valley Optimist Club, and we had Caroline Koo representing the Charlotte Optimist Club. Both were first-place winners, and both will be competing at the District Level in Southern Pines in a couple of weeks; so, my congratulations to them and all the contestants and their team of supporters. They are competing for scholarship money that they will advance hopefully to the International level of competition where they will receive some big scholarship monies for their college education. That was a good turnout yesterday at the Morrison Regional Library.

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#### ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember Newton, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:18 p.m.



Emily A. Kunze, Deputy City Clerk, NCCMC

Length of Meeting: 5 Hours, 15 Minutes  
Minutes Completed: May 13, 2019