

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for a Budget Workshop on Wednesday, May 20, 2020, at 1:08 p.m. in Room CH-14 of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Vi Lyles presiding. Councilmembers present were Dimple Ajmera, Tariq Bokhari, Ed Driggs, Larken Egleston, Julie Eiselt, Malcolm Graham, Renee Johnson, James Mitchell, Matt Newton, Victoria Watlington, and Braxton Winston II.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. I: INTRODUCTION

Mayor Lyles said this is the meeting of the Charlotte City Council this Wednesday, May 20, 2020, and the purpose and intent of this meeting is to discuss any possible amendment or adjustment to the City manager's recommended proposed budget by the mayor and the council. We held a budget public hearing and the feedback that we got from the community was in support of the bike-ways. More asking for the requestor consideration of that for our retirement system and comments around arts. We've held our public meeting. We've also had a chance to read through the manager's recommended budget. Today we will recognize each councilmember and you will be able to comment on the budget overall and any suggestions that you might have for it. After we have all of the councilmembers be recognized, staff will continue to look for the ideas that you would have and will keep a running tally of those. At the end of the meeting, our usual practice has been that if there are five votes for any proposed change then it moves forward for the staff to actually flush out the idea or whatever we're talking about and comment on that and our next meeting of the budget will be on next Wednesday, May 27, 2020, at noon. With that, I'm going to turn it over to the manager to talk about what has transpired and where he is and then we will go from there.

Marcus Jones, City Manager said at this point and time doing the budget adjustments typically there is a question that's asked of me and that is has anything changed since the last time or since the budget presentation so, we don't have any changes in terms of additional revenue or losses of revenue or changes that are related to the expenditure side. I will tell you that the budget that was presented to you on May 4, 2020, was a structurally balanced budget. I'll go a little bit more in detail what that really means. There an undesignated Fund balance, which is when you take all the revenue and all the expenditures together of about \$72,000 Ryan is that right?

Ryan Bergman, Strategy & Budget said \$71,270.

Mr. Jones said That is available as a starting point. I do want to talk a little bit about what has transpired since May 4, 2020. We did have an opportunity to talk with councilmembers about some of the questions that you had and that was during that week of May 4, 2020, that Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. As well as some follow conversations the following week. What was provided for you on Monday was a series of questions and answers and Mr. Driggs I hope we've done a little bit better than in the past. I think sometimes the concern was getting the answer to the questions the day of the adjustment period. So, those were provided on Monday and I believe those were at your fingertips. A couple of things before I turn it back over to Mayor. Just a bit of a reminder that it is your budget right now and that this is the opportunity for any changes that you have. We did have budget principals in this budget that remain structurally balanced to provide core services to protect employees and to address the budget gap. One thing that important and I don't think I did a good job on this on May 4, 2020. Just talk a little bit about the budget in general and some of the trade-offs and that some of the questions that you had during the week after the budget. The budget is structurally balanced. What I mean by that is that ongoing revenue supports ongoing expenditures. It not just structurally balanced in 2021. It's also structurally balanced in 2022. So, what I mean by that as we take all of the cost that's associated with the 2021 budget and roll those over into 2022, we've established revenue sources that can sustain that. When you take dollars from one time, so like Fund balance or anything similar to that you would have to replicate that in 2022 and that's one of the reasons why we didn't have that as a principle. I will tell you going in 2022 when I say that the budget is still structurally balanced

a year out that doesn't include any assumptions around pay increases because the pay increase assumptions are for the FY21 budget. Again, still structurally balanced not just this year but next year. The impact that I do want to talk about a bit. So, there are three buckets if you will. There is the general fund that once again for the most part pays for Police, Fire, and Solid Waste transportation. All of those services that we call core services. Then we have a PAYGO ((Pay-As-You-Go) and a Capital fund. Yes, we did use some of the future revenue streams that were associated with the PAYGO fund to boost back up the General fund. Again, Police, Fire, Solid Waste transportation, our core services and there is an impact in the out years on PAYGO, but that impact is not really the core that you would do with PAYGO. Let's say that roughly \$25 - \$26 million a year. Over the past few years, we have a bump in PAYGO, and we've been able to do some amazing thing. Like aging in place and some of the East, West corridor strategies. But again, the core things that we do with PAYGO will still be intact in the out years. Yes, we did move some revenue in the Capital investment plan over to the General Fund. Again, there are some trade-offs. The trade-offs are our total capacity in the out years. The reality is the next time that you would address the bond package would be in FY2023. So, that's years down the road before that would become a potential issue and it's not just the revenue that comes in. It's an interests' assumption. It is the way that we actually spend the cash. So, that's a bit further out. So, those were the bulk of the questions that first week after the budget. It was sure I can see how it's balanced but at what cost? So, there is cost associated with PAYGO which again for some of those things over and beyond, above what we typically do, and then there's some cost associated with future bond packages but not the 2020 bond package. Just to bring us up to spend where we are now; this budget was also based on a forecast that had three-quarters of declining revenue. The last quarter of FY2020 which end in June, in the first two quarters of the upcoming fiscal year and our sales tax really drove that declined. When we start to think about the general fund, for the most part, we are talking about property tax and sales tax. Which makes up almost 70% of the revenue that comes in. Where we were with the sales tax decline about 8½%, is not inconsistent with other large cities across North Carolina. As we come back in the Fall to review where we are after the first quarter of FY2021, the period ends in September we'll have a better idea of where we ended in sales tax because the governor has pushed that payment until July, and we'll have a better idea of where we are in general with the budget. Typically, we don't do that. We do it in January. We'll come back in January. We'll talk to each month, but January is typically where we have the re-forecast. So, we'll have even more data related to sales tax and more data related to expenditures. So, I will tell you that where we are right now, I still believe we have a very still have a solid budget for FY2021 which is structurally balanced with some trade-offs and some other funds. The Thing that I would be most cautious about is what happens with our forecast. Which right now is the base forecast. If that gets worst, we will continuously talk to you about where we are with that but right now nothing has changed in terms of our expectations or what we know about the 2021 budget. So, with that said Mayor unless you have a question of me, I'll turn it back over to you.

Mayor Lyles said [inaudible] on your screens you can see Alyson Craig from Planning and I believe Haley Gentry from Aviation, we can call upon her as well. I thought we might start with the districts with questions or comments about the budget. We may start with Mr. Egleston if he's okay with doing that. Then we will go with districts 1, 2, and 3. Then we will do the at large members and be ready to address questions, comments, or suggestions for change.

Councilmember Egleston said I don't have a lot. I said most of this to the Manager but I think that I had some serious concerns as all of this COVID-19 situation started to evolve, that we were going to have to make some pretty Jacobean cuts in our budget and that is potentially going to involve people who currently work for us and that it was going to mean that we couldn't fulfill a lot of the promises we had made and goals that we had stated. So, frankly, I was stunned to the point of needing some of that explanation the manager just gave as to have this was even possible. So, kudos to the manager and to the entire budget team for being able to make sure that we are not eliminating people who currently work for us, that we're not falling short on the promises we've made to our constituents and that we're not raising taxes at a time where a large percentage of the people who live in our community are facing financial hardships. So, you know there were a number of

things that I think in a normal year I would have proposed as potential additions to the budget, a lot of them were nice to have but not have to-haves in light of the fact that cuts have obviously had to be made to make sure that we can maintain those promises and maintain our tax rate. I don't intend to do that today unless no one else claims the \$70,000 today and then I'll grab it. I've had conversations with some of our colleagues about this, I don't know how much room there is for adjustment and where any additional money could be garnered from for these efforts but I do think that with all of what's been going on and with obviously the behavioral changes that this last two months has caused and many of us are residents of the City. I do think that there's an opportunity, and I'm sure Mayor ProTeam would speak to this to some degree as well. I do you think that there is an opportunity to be even more mindful and more aggressive on things like walkability, bike-ability, open space. I just bought a new bike for myself this weekend and every bike shop and bike person that I talked to said this is like Christmas time for them. They've never seen sales in May that came anywhere close to this. People want to be back outside, and I think that there are even more appreciative now than ever. Things like protected bike lanes, wider sidewalks. People are out walking their dogs now and having to make sure that they're giving each other the proper amount of social distances, they pass each other in the streets. All of a sudden, the sidewalks are a lot more problematic than maybe we use to realize. I do think that has been one of our top priorities maybe now more than ever that should be one of our top priorities walkability, bike-ability, alternative modes of transportation and again if there are ways that we can look through the budget and come back a week from now and say well we could be more aggressive on that front and here are the three or four places we have to pull those dollars from, undoubtedly those dollars would be pulled from something else that is important but I think it will allow council the opportunity to rank their priorities. I think that is something I would like to see considered. One of the other things I had hoped to include in this budget and maybe we'll look down the road to next year's budget or thereafter if I am involved with more budgets beyond that. I'd like to see the City placing a higher priority on store preservation. I'd like to see the City investing in our Historic Landmark Commission's Revolving Fund even if it's not a great amount. But even \$50,000, \$100,000, \$200,000 a year, I think symbolically would demonstrate that if something that's a priority of the City and it's a place you can put money that revolves and get a lot of that money back because they invest in these properties and are able to sell them. I'm certainly going to understand if that's not something I'm going to achieve this year I think to maintain the tax rate where it is and make sure that we're delivering on all of our promises is greater importance than trying to add new bells and whistles to this budget. But I'll mention that now [inaudible] \$70,000 that's there or just that something that we can be thinking about for next year, but I'll see the rest of my time and save the rebuttal later.

Mayor Lyles said I just want to note that Mr. Egleston knew about the \$70,000 and he knew what his numbers were specifically for historic preservation.

Councilmember Watlington said I am very very pleased. I've said it a couple of times. I don't have any adjustments to the budget at this time. I'm ready to get to work and I'm excited about what we were able to do. Kudos to the staff and the Manager for being able to figure out how to continue our priorities in these uncertain times. Looking forward to getting to work and if nobody else claims it councilmember Egleston, I will support you.

Councilmember Johnson said I also want to say how impressed it was for the City Manager to be able to balance a budget in an unprecedented time. I did have an opportunity to speak with him somewhat about the transportation, infrastructure in district 4. We know that it's a very fast-growing district in the region. So, the fact that we're able to get some funding for transportation, infrastructure, and the congestion mitigation I'm happy with. I know that we've heard from the district and we'd like more so I don't know that the \$70,000 would be a dent in that but if there is any way that we can look at those dollars and I know we discussed it and I trust the priorities of the City staff. If there is a way to distribute that a little more equally, I know that there is a need in our district.

Councilmember Newton said I like the budget as well. I think to have it be structurally balanced given the circumstances is extraordinary, so I want to thank the staff for your hard work on this. Thank the Manager as well. I do have a couple of concerns. I don't

know with us eliminating some of the open jobs within the City if those were needed or necessary jobs that might come back a little bit later on down the road. I do understand and appreciate the necessity of doing so. I'm on board with that. I had a conversation with Mr. Manager and with our finance director regarding our Debt Service and I don't know if I received an answer for that in the paperwork or the Q&A that was released to us on Monday. Am I recalling right that we were looking at switching? I don't know if this was in our PAYGO fund or coming out of our CIP for Debt Service the amount about \$1.8 million. Was that right?

Mr. Jones said I think I know where you're going with this Mr. Newton. There were a couple of things that we did and this 2021 budget that bought more resources to the General fund and a couple of those had an impact on the Debt Service Fund. So, as I mentioned earlier, nothing impacts the 2020 bond. Your next bond would be 2022 which is FY2023 and our studies state today, which changes, is about \$223 million. That includes both what we call COPS and bonds. So, your studies state going into FY2023 would be reduced to about \$208 million. I think that's about a \$15 million change, and I don't see Kelly saying anything yet and that's for every two years. What I would say to you again we're a few years away from that period and time but there is more assumption that goes into the debt model that could potentially make that better, hopefully not worse by the time we get to the 2022 bond. So, all of the actions taken together bring a steady-state down to about \$208 million.

Mr. Newton said the reason why I ask, so we're talking about Debt Service that could create about \$20 million-plus for future council and their plans. Sidewalks, transit, micro-grants, neighborhood grants, etc. So, I just want to ask by taking that out and using that are we in any way shape or form hamstringing a future council in their priorities of using that today, is that something that's going to take away from a council in 2024, 2025 to do what they want to?

Mr. Jones said yes, that's a good question and I hate it when someone says that's a yes or no. So, today you could say that that does limit what you have in terms of capacity but that's also making some assumption about where we are with sale tax today and what we're doing in terms of interest as well as the money that goes which we call the draw schedule and I would suggest that there are so many additional variables that are associated with this that it's tough to say that when you get to that point and time that you wouldn't be back at \$223 million or you wouldn't be at \$230 million.

Mr. Newton said sure. I want to do everything in my power to make sure that we aren't limiting the ability of future councils to do their jobs. I think that \$70,000 going towards something like that probably a drop in the bucket. I want to just remind everyone that we do have an additional unrestricted fund that I think even \$1.8 million out of the would-be end and of itself a drop in the bucket. Probably about 1% of that fund. That would be our reserve fund. I think it's something that was created specifically for a purpose like this when we experience shortcomings or shortfalls within our budget due to a crisis and in this circumstance of course probably the greatest crisis in the history of Charlotte. The Coronavirus Crisis so I just want to remind everyone of that. That I would say let's look at that a little more thoroughly. I don't know what an Action Item on that would be. So, am I right in us talking about that Debt service being \$1.8 million? Was that right? Am I remerging that correctly or am I wrong on that? Was larger than that or smaller?

Mr. Jones said what's happening is you are taking what I believe is the ABC money. The 25% that use to go to the Debt Service Fund that now is moving that 25% so that 100% is in the General Fund much like other Cities and Kelly I think that's what he is talking about. The equivalency of that is \$1.8 million.

Kelly Flannery, Chief Financial Officer said when we think about this study today and going forward the impact from the ABC is nominal if not immaterial. I think when we're looking at the model of being super conservative and we are looking at investment earning assumptions, investment rate assumptions as well as sales tax collection assumptions. I think those are the big drivers. So, as it relates to the move of the ABC it's about \$4.5 million of the \$15 million and impact but in the long run, it doesn't really change the model.

Mr. Newton said would I be paraphrasing correctly if, I think I'm hearing and what your saying is we can make that up? Is that what I'm hearing?

Ms. Flannery said if I knew that I wouldn't be sitting here right? But I think that's a safe assumption. There are some things we do and look at in the model because we trying to be super conservative so things like construction cost that typically in every session would go down, we didn't factor that in. We are just trying to be super conservative. So, I think the \$208 million your floor.

Mr. Newton said for me it ends and district 5. Silverline, much like district 1 and out towards the west side as well Silverline is so very important and I want to make sure that we don't find ourselves in the position where we're cutting aspects of that. Things like the rail trail for example. Assuming that that's not on the table here. I think what I'm hearing is it isn't. I am very happy about this budget and very happy about the fact that we are talking about it being structurally balanced as you were saying Mr. Manager. There being no tax increase here and there is no water increase as well. Which I think is significant so thank you so much. That's all I have right now.

Councilmember Bokhari said I just start by saying great work to Marcus Jones, the City Manager, the staff, everyone who has obviously worked under tough circumstances to pull together what you might almost want to think of as a minor miracle. I think it's important to recognize the backdrop that we are looking at this budget and we heard it last time we all met. March, food and beverage taxes down 56%, occupancy tax down 70%, vehicle rentals down 97%. The sales tax forecast as he placed his budget in front of us was down over \$11 million. We are in uncharted territory and I think import for us to remember that. Also, to remember the fact that we been presented a budget that might have almost seem too good to be true when we saw it. No tax increase, no layoffs or furloughs, no dipping into the reserve, no increase in CATS fares, and very important to me and many of us I know keeping our commitment to Police and Fire on this multi-year journey that we've been on with them. So, the ability to do that and really just eliminating vacant positions and really tightening belts I think is important to recognize alongside of saying there are some strategic items in here. Like congestion mitigation desperately needed in South Charlotte and other places, corridors, and the focus, they're going to get. So, I think those are all the really amazing good new stories but it's also important as we heard him say, there are implications in the long term that we have to keep our eye on. That the reduction and the capacity in PAYGO, Debt, and things of that nature we are making some assumptions here that things are going to at some relatively reasonable point get better. If they don't, I think that's the mark of saying we've been able to squeeze every drop of this lemon right now, but things have to get better at some point in order for us not to be in very very bad shape. So, what I'll say is first is kudos. A job well done but I'll also say I'm scared right now. We've all been working really hard and we are in the weeds of all this. But I don't know what's coming and what new problems are going to be there. What new challenges are first responders going to be facing that will require us to change our model which will cost money. Small business and workforce, the life-flow, the gasoline to the engine that has stalled right now. They're going to need things in different ways that now only impact our incoming revenues in the form of taxes but also, they will require support from us. We heard today in committee from Sarah Balcom, one of our small business task force members, who is the co-founder of Girl Time, with 6 employees. Their foot-traffic is down 80% right now. If you think about that as the underlying macro to the macro-picture right now. I don't think we know what's coming and all that is going to cost money and require strategies. Then things that councilmember Winston and I have been looking at for a while. The digital divide, upward mobility, those things like they're not going to get better, in fact, they're getting worse. They are going to get worse as this economic future is kind of embark upon and where we are heading. So, I say all those as examples of this is a good budget that tightens all the right areas but it's not too good to be true. We've made sacrifices in the long-term that require things to get better. We are going to be in a position over the next year I believe that we are going to have to reimagine what we call core services today. That's not just going to require us to be nimble and reactive to new pieces of data and information that come up. It's going to take the money and that money is going to potentially be getting smaller and smaller. Now is not the

normal time in the budget cycle for us to say well there's an extra little pot of money here. Let's do that here. We need to keep this mindset strong going forward so that we're able to react to whatever the new normal is coming up. So, again I don't mean to dampen a thought out there. I just want to say it's a great job but it's the first step in a marathon of steps that we are embarking on and I appreciate all the work that has gone on in that first step, but I think if we keep that mindset we will do as best as we are expected to do. So, thank you.

Councilmember Driggs said I just wanted to join everybody else in congratulating the manager and staff on the solutions they found. The challenges that we face. I think this budget chair, I would particularly like to know the presentation of the budget. It was also exceptional, but I don't know how many budget nerds there are out there, but I tell you that the layout this budget and the transparency is exceptional so Kelly, Ryan, and manager, everybody who was involved, it's a beautiful book. I'd also like to point out I believe councilmember Bokhari is right to be worried. We are all in a mode where we need to be cautious. I would like to highlight also the fact that we have the benefit of starting from a position of exceptional financial strength compared to many communities the position that we were in when this crisis started was unusual. So, we have a triple eye debt rating, we have a 16% fun balance which is not being invaded in order to achieve this balanced budget. No tax increase has as have been noted. I've particularly pleased to know it also the funds for district 7 are in this budget, near and dear to my heart, so we will see some congestion relief there. We will see some ongoing capital investment in projects like [inaudible] road. We will also see capital investment, I'm very hopeful through the Ballantyne project. So, when you're in that position your ability to withstand some of those things that could happen in the future is improved, we still have indemnities that are available to us that would leave us in a better position than most municipalities still. Mr. Manager I think you probably talked about this, but I thought it would be useful if you could just quickly go over a couple of items in the budget as an increase in legal expenses of 45% and technology of 38% and I know that there's a story there. Only if you could just remind us what that is in case people pick up on that. I also want to talk about the planning budget.

Mr. Jones said we started off two years ago with what we would call consolidation, but it was really for some of those departments that provide services to other departments like communications, HR, and IT. Instead of having a bunch of individuals out in the departments decentralized, we thought that there would be some opportunities for efficiencies as well as savings by centralizing. So, we've done that with HR, communications, and more recently IT. So, let's talk about the two that you mentioned. From the legal perspective what we have that were certain attorneys that were dedicated to departments. Most of them were in the police department. Those attorneys showed up in the polices budget. Now Patrick has all of those attorneys reporting to him and that why you see the big increase. In terms of IT, it's the latest in terms of this decentralization of certain functions that were departments provide services for other departments. There's been a lot of kudos today to the staff and especially the budget staff, the finance staff, I also want to give kudos to the departments that were willing to trust having the asset that in their department being moved more centrally. So, believe or not we had Police and Fire give up IT positions so that they could be centralized. So, when you see those big jump ups increases in IT and in legal it is because individuals were being charged to departments. They're now being charged centrally to those departments. They are not new people coming in but being moved from departments under one umbrella. To the point that Mr. Bokhari made earlier there going to be some opportunities in the future as a position becomes open that there are going to be some efficiencies because we have centralized some of these functions.

Mr. Driggs said my challenge to councilmembers is to find all the places in the budgets where there are reductions and expenses that have actually moved to these new cross centers. I also wanted to mention I've had a conversation with Mayor ProTeam about planning and I'm going to let her talk about that. I'm sure she will explain it. I just want you to know that I share some of those concerns and I hope that as she talks about that we will find a way to be responsive to some of the issues she raises. I would mention also the CIP (Community Investment Plan) right now is kind of a big empty space. I hope that

in the course of the budget year and not waiting until next year we will have an ongoing process of identifying capital projects and trying to start penciling in so that we have a little more visibility of the future because right now we fall off a cliff essentially in the way this is presented. So, I view that as an ongoing process. A brief comment, if we have \$70,000. I don't think we need this meeting to look around for ways to spend it. I think that will be probably and gladly plenty of ways that we can spend that. If we have the option of just keeping it and having it available for council actions in the future that might require amounts like that. Mr. Manager thank you again. Those are my comments.

Mayor Lyles said I also want to say in that consolidation I believe when we had the new City attorney when Mr. Baker came on board, we asked for that centralization. So, I know that it's one thing that's helping us as we begin to look at our processes and interactions with the City attorney's office that it's helpful that we've put those groups together.

Councilmember Graham said, welcome everybody. Thank you for being patient with me. It's been a really really crazy day. I'm glad to be here and I'm glad that my day started with the very good news that we have a new police chief that's been appointed later this Fall. Deputy Chief Jennings. That's was a very great way to start the day. I think that he is going to do a really good job for us in our community. So, I want to thank the manager and the mayor for that fast action and his appointment. I think he going to a great job for our community. Mr. Manager as I told you before I tried really really hard to find something wrong with this budget. I really did. Given the circumstances that we are working under. Just like my colleagues have communicated, based on where we are as a community at this point and time, I think the budget is a very good budget. Every councilmember brings expertise to the table so when I have a budget question, I tend to listen to councilmember Driggs and if he can't find anything wrong with it, certainly I can't. I just want to echo the sentiments from my colleagues in terms of the fact fullness of the budget. It's a great crediting know to these previous councils who had the discipline to make sure that we are financially stable as a community and as an organization, that 16% fund balance is there, and that this represents no tax increase. Those things have been said before, but I think they are worth mentioning yet again. Again, I want to thank you and the staff for your attention to details and understanding the moment that we are in and I think the budget reflects that.

A couple of things I do want to highlight that's in the budget and worth noting not only for the residents of district 2 but also throughout the City. Those who live among fragile and threatened corridors that a term that we use to use but I think it still a prize today that the budget really puts an [audible] on to how we address quarter and quarterly evaluation in neighborhoods and something that I'm really really excited about that those dollars are in place really to drive the mission of this council in terms of how we better revitalize our community and our neighborhoods. So, I'm really excited about those. I'm also hopeful Mr. Manager that the dollars that we put in the budget will match the energy coming from the staff to execute in a way that maximizes those dollars to small businesses and really getting in those corridors and doing some of the [inaudible] work necessary for those investments to pay dividends for the community. I'm really excited about that and want to work with your staff to make that happen. Obviously, anything in place is apart of that. How do we work along fragile and threaten corridors like Beatties Ford road and Lasalle street is really important? Having the City be an investor and projects that make sense is important to me as well, so I am excited about that and excited about things that are happening within the CIP that is coming to a conclusion that was a part of the previous budget before. I think we are in good shape. I did highlight though transportation and transit as a point of consideration going forward. Clearly, I understand where we are as a community. I do think that hopefully that when we get beyond COVID-19 and we get a handle on our budget forecasting in terms of what the future holds for us that we really can roll up our sleeves and see what we can do preemptively along moving transit, along a little bit further financially, and being a little bit more aggressive in terms of how we begin to solve some of these issues and problems. None the less, Mr. Manager and Ms. Mayor, I think the budget reflects where we are as a community. I really don't have any comments other than the ones that I have made. I just look forward to working with the staff, again Madame Mayor to execute the budget as we move forward.

Councilmember Ajmera said I also share my colleagues' parts on a financially strong position that we are [inaudible] City staff, especially our City manager for proposing a very solid budget that aligns with our community goals and the need that we have heard from residents without any tax increase. So, thanks to the City Manager. I'm so very excited to see that we are furthering our overall planning and the sea of goals in this budget considering the times are in now. So, thanks to our City Manager for that. I was going through the questionnaire that was sent to us a couple of days ago and I asked about all of the positions that have been eliminated. One that particularly stood out for me was the City treasures role that provides oversight for our debt management, cash, and investment functions and that's a very critical role. A question to you City manager. How are those responsibilities being divided among existing team members?

Mr. Jones said we are very fortunate here in Charlotte that our CFO Kelly Flannery has such a depth of knowledge in that area, that she is taking on the responsibility. Her title is Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer. We just happen to be in a good place, which is a part of her expertise.

Ms. Ajmera said great. Is this a temporary elimination of this position or once the pandemic is over and we are seeing our revenues going back up, will that position be filled again at some point?

Mr. Jones said as long as we have Kelly in the position, we don't see at all bringing back that position because once again she's able to cover both and do it very well.

Ms. Ajmera said that's great. Thank you, Mr. Manager. The other question I have is the allocation of our pension liabilities. I know we had one speaker who serves on the board and talked about our obligation, especially to our retirees and our liabilities. What has been our funding in the past, percentage-wise, and what has been the funding this year, and if there is a possibility to increase that funding from the excess that we have?

Mr. Jones said sure. I'll take the first shot at this. This is clearly and Ryan's wheelhouse. He was talking about the firefighter retirement system, which the City operates that system and we have by statute what we are supposed to contribute. I have been in communication with that board with a commitment to do more than what is statutorily required because we are seeing that decrease in the funding level. I believe at 1.35% more than what we're required to add and that's apart of the proposed budget.

Ms. Ajmera said thank you. I know that we are funding more 1.35% is more than what is statutorily required but what are we currently at in terms of the funding level? Is it at 70%, 60%, 80%? How are we funded currently?

Mr. Bergman said our current funded status is 82.7%. [inaudible] had a report recently on public pension systems which put the average around 73%. So, I don't think it's in dire strain but as the manager mentioned, for more than 20 years we've had this system where the City contributes 12.65%, and the employee contributes 12.65%. I think there's been recognized over the last couple of years that's not going to be sustainable, so the manager's office and the budget office and finance have been working with the system on a long-term strategy. So, I think at some part in the Summer or the Fall they will want to present in front of the budget committee presumably to talk about that but as the manager said we are contributing more than we are required. We are contributing the amount that they formally asked the City manager and there's a recognition that this is really a step one in a long-term process.

Ms. Ajmera said thank you, Ryan. Suddenly we are in a stronger position without a doubt when it comes to our liabilities and addressing those because we are funding in a higher percentage than what is statutorily required but what I'm concerned about is that as you Ryan, just stated that sustainability of this would be a concern if you are not going to be continuing to fund the 12. Sum percentage, match by employees. So, I would like us to have any excess fund those liabilities. We have seen across the nation how many Cities have not been able to meet their obligations when it comes to retirees. I know we are far away formed that but if we have excess, I think we should go ahead and fund it so that

we can meet our obligations in the future. We do not know how the economy will recover. That we will have in excess in the future to fund at a higher percentage. Yes, we have been blessed this year where we funded at 1.35 percentage more than what was required but I don't know what that looks like in 2021, 2022, and onwards. So, I would highly suggest that we fund any excess that we have into that even though it will just be a drop in the ocean. That's how retirement accounts get funded. Also, I agree with councilmember Egleston had mentioned about bike lanes in funding that. I'm not much of a biker but I have seen especially in this pandemic, folks are biking more, their walking more, and there is a greater need for bike lanes and just overall how that helps tackle mobility access. I would also like us to consider funding our bike plan. I'm in full support of funding that. With that, that's all I have. Thank you, staff, and Mr. manager for doing a great job with our budget. Very impressive.

Councilmember Winston said again congratulations to the manager. You've been getting unanimous praise for this most important [inaudible] policy we vote on [inaudible]. I'll be quick. There are three things if we have the opportunity to see the types of investment in a commitment to bridging the digital divide. Any kind of "extra money" like I probably have said, there's no such thing as extra but if we can put to standing up a process that aims to bridge the digital divide in all of Charlotte. With that said, it's something that I have been working on a lot. Everything that we do we've talked about it a lot over the past three years that I've been on council. Operating as a region. I think in order to really do that, we as elected officials have to have more engagement with other elected officials. It has to be a process and a way to get that done. If there is any money that can go into a bucket that councilmembers can use specifically kind of aimed at other elected officials in the region. For instance, if we want to do the digital divide, we have to engage with other policymakers and the surrounding rural communities to figure out how to get our priorities aligned. It is not good enough just for different staff members between those different entities to work together. It has to be on the elective level, and it shouldn't be just up to us as individuals to figure out how to get that done. The third thing I would like to see is election day support. It's something I think I've spoken to you, Mr. Jones about in terms of is this something that we can deal with within budget time? One, either with our organization to give election day off to encourage all of our employees to go out and vote or do we have the ability to mail out absentee ballot request forms to all of our residents to increase our specific engagement in our city.

Councilmember Mitchell said I'm going to echo a lot of the comments my colleagues made. The city manager and staff great job. I just want to highlight a couple of things that all ways stand out during this budget time conversation. One is no property tax increase, no lay-offs. Thank you for continuing to support our public safety employees, particularly I'm excited about the \$24.5 million to our corridors that we started a new rebranding process. We call them opportunity corridors. I think that sends a strong message to our citizens who live in our corridors. What they mean to the City and then maintaining the funding level for all of our existing financial partners. Two of them stand out to me that I have a lot of passion for. My Brother's Keeper program as well as the Women's Business Center of Charlotte. So, Kudos sir. Great job to you and your staff.

Councilmember Eiselt said I join my 10 other colleagues in saying thank you Mr. Manager and to the budget department and all of the department heads that really worked hard on this budget. It was sort of a big collective exhale when you presented it to us to know that we are in great shape and relatively good shape compared to what a lot of other large cities across the country are, so I appreciate that very much. I appreciate you for keeping that money in there for our bike lanes. As Ms. Ajmera said and think Mr. Egleston said we are seeing a lot more use of that and when you walk in the streets now you realize how much of our infrastructure is dedicated to cars that are parked whereas people want to use them now to walk on and us their bikes and scooters whatnot.

Thank you for that. I also appreciate the corridor investment and that leads to the one thing that I am asking that we take a look at in the budget and that is the UDO (Unified Development Ordinance) and the comprehensive vision plan. For the councilmembers that have been around for a little bit, we know that the UDO was paused before Taiwo Jaiyeoba was hired because we started talking about the need to have a Comprehensive

Vision Plan which is essentially the blueprint that would then lay out what the policy should be to fulfill the vision that the comprehensive plan lays out. I think it's even more important that we accelerate that process now and I saw that we had about \$600,000 cut to the planning department and a large part because projective revenues for permitting fees and other fees but I think as we really think about the promise that we made to our community to build a more equitable city where people have more access to opportunity, more access to affordable homes and to put in public transportation. The only way we can do that is through a master plan and if we are around long enough to be able to look back on this period and time, I'd like to be able to say this is the good that came out of this pandemic. There is precedence for that. Central Park I learned was built because of the Malaria outbreak when they recognized the need for more people to have access to fresh air, so was the Champs Elysees in Paris. The open streets in Barcelona were all developed when they realized that more people needed access to health environments so I would ask that we take a look at that and see what we can do to move the Comprehensive vision Plan along. I know we can't catch up for lost time but I think some of the cuts came to our consultants and I just am really worried about the fact that it's very possible that what's going to happen with this pandemic is that our economic segregation and the economic disparity in this community will be more pronounced and one of them was that we as a City can address that is through the Comprehensive Vision Plan and the UDO. I hope some of my colleagues will support me on that and I thank you for giving that some consideration and for otherwise a really solid budget. So, thank you.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. II: DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL ADJUSTMENTS TO THE CITY MANAGER'S FY 2021 PROPOSED BUDGET

Councilmember Egleston said well since nobody else made a direct claim for it. I do think this is something too where many folks would be inclined, myself included to find a project their district, but I do think that what I mentioned earlier if the funds are there, for us to put something in this budget I think that this is a district neutral proposal because historic preservation is done our community. I think it's something that spares a lot of private investment. You don't have to look any further than Camp North End, Optimist Hall, a lot of things that have happened around our city in the last couple of years in the name of historic preservation to see the investment sparse in the areas around it. The improved infrastructure is done through private dollars around it. I think that it is a small investment with a large return that benefits all parts of our city so I will formally propose that we utilize the additional dollars that but minimal, I think would be impactful in the Historic Landmarks Revolving Fund if I've got 4 colleagues that are willing to support that and move forward.

Mayor Lyles said tell me how much money we are beyond. Is it \$70,000?

Mr. Egleston said we'll call it \$70,000 for a round number.

Mayor Lyles said I think I heard some threads of something. Maybe not direct. So, let me say that Mr. Egleston has put the first realistic, can you give me an amount Mr. Egleston?

Mr. Egleston said \$70,000 for the Charlotte Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission Revolving Fund.

Mayor Lyles said what that means is if we could get 5 votes to support that, the staff will come back and talk about that but, I also thought I heard Ms. Eiselt say put money back into the UDO Vision Plan consultants. I want to make sure. Is there any more direct request. I think we all talked about something, but I want to make sure we captured any direct request so that we have that.

Councilmember Watlington said yes, I was just going to ask about this question. I agree with Ms. Eiselt. I would love to see more transportation dollars. More planning dollars as it relates to UDO but wasn't sure exactly what the next step was to support that. As I said, I am happy to support the Historic Preservation piece as well.

Mayor Lyles said at this time I'd like you to say specifically If you'd like a project and money that the staff would develop a response to how it could be accomplished.

Councilmember Winston said I don't know how much all of these things would cost but I would like to consider four things: for election day support, making it a paid holiday for our employees, finding out direct to mail application for the absentee ballot to everybody in the city, how much that would cost, putting money behind a commitment to bridging the digital divide, and an intergovernmental fund to help councilmembers engage other elected officials around the state and region.

Mayor Lyles said so we have \$70,000. Would you have a preference around any one of those in priority order? We can go through them as a vote at the end but if you could just tell me where. I know the cost of a day off for employees.

Mr. Winston said I know that's more than \$70,000. You know we go through the twelve months thinking high level and getting ideas and guiding the staff on how to make those things work. So, if within the money that is left over, we can do something that makes sense to stand those up, I'd love that feedback from staff.

Mayor Lyles said I understand that, but I think for the vote going forward is there a priority you want to ask your colleagues to support. That's what I'm asking for. Is there a 1,2,3, and a 4?

Mr. Winston said okay I understand. The digital divide would be # 1, election day support would be # 2, engagement of regional elected leaders would be #'s 3 and 4.

Councilmember Eiselt said so I would like my colleagues to consider the addition back into the budget of a half-million dollars for planning for the UDO, which includes the consultant, the legal reviews, the economic analysis, and the other budget items that were in there, communications and marketing. Again, that would have to be refined by Mr. Jaiyeoba, but my understanding is that is the number that came out that we would really need if we wanted to get the UDO back on track.

Mayor Lyles said when we get beyond \$70,000 is there something you'd like to cut to get there? Just think about it and get back to me okay.

Councilmember Mitchell said if we could get the City Manager to come back about adding \$5.9 million to the CIP for transportation roads to the Brookhill affordable housing project.

Mayor Lyles said \$5.9 million to the CIP for Brookhill?

Mr. Mitchell said for the transportation road infostructure. Yes, Mayor.

Mayor Lyles said for the road infostructure?

Mr. Mitchell said yes. Thank you.

Councilmember Ajmera said This question is for Ryan. Could you tell us what was the amount, the actual amount not the percentage that we had put in this year's budget towards our firefighter's pension plan?

Ryan Bergman, Strategy & Budget said each percent is worth about \$800,000 so it would be \$11.2 million.

Ms. Ajmera said thank you. I'm good.

Councilmember Graham said I just wanted to support councilmember Egleston's request.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Mitchell may I come back to you to talk about the \$5.9 million? That would be in next year's capital budget going forward. I don't know where we are with that but It's considerable in how you would see that because that would have to be bond funding, I guess.

Mr. Mitchell said I would like for the City Manager you can bring all those options back to us and then let the council have those conversations and in light of whether that project gets funded. At least let us have a conversation on how we can at least provide the info structure to Brookhill.

Mayor Lyles said for this budget or for discussion at some point when the financial analysis comes back?

Mr. Mitchell said when the financial analysis comes back from the City Manager.

Mayor Lyles said okay, that helps.

Councilmember Johnson said [inaudible] a reference to transportation and improvement for the \$70,000 but I just want to ask if we can hold off making any decisions until the task force makes recommendations regarding the COVID needs. There are still many gaps in the community. We still have individuals in food lines, you know there's rent assistance. I know recommendations haven't been made. Can we just hold off on macro issues because there are still residents who have not received unemployment and stimulus, and there are just people that are really hurting? We are on a zoom call because of a pandemic. So, if we can take a step back to keep that at the forefront. If there are any extra dollars, there are needs in the community.

Mayor Lyles said we'll start off with that as for the first five because if you decide that then well go from there. I think that I have the following list of things. Marie's going to put it up on the screen of what we heard.

Ms. Watlington said councilmember Mitchell brought up the funding for Brookhill should that budget go forward. You asked a couple of questions. As I think about what I would do here and how that plays into this. Is the thought that that money would show up later on in a bond cycle? If you could just explain to me a little bit more about why you said what you said and what are the implications of the money doesn't go into here today.

Mayor Lyles said the reason that I said that is that one, we asked the staff to work with the developer, to come back with how this project might be funded and how it looks. So, he requested in his funding for the housing project to be on the \$5.9 million or whatever it was. So, that's one option. The other option would be if had to pay for that, where would that \$5.9 million, which is generally any major road construction project like that would be a capital project that would have to be done. So, I was assuming that what Mr. Mitchell, I wanted to clarify with him, is that this conversation would come after we got information on Brookhill on the housing and the idea of how we would fund the roads as apart of that review. That would not be an add or delete to this current budget. It might be an add after this budget is adopted, but it wouldn't be right now. Mr. Mitchell, did I state that correctly for you? I want to make sure I did that correctly.

Mr. Mitchell said Mayor you are good. Your spot on.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Egleston request to put \$70,000 in the Historic Landmark fund and then Mr. Winston asked for the digital divide, the election day support, and the intergovernmental, Ms. Eiselt asked for \$500,00 for the UDO, and I think if you would put Ms. Johnson down as reserve the \$70,000 until after COVID expenses and recommendations come forward. I think that's what Ms. Johnson is saying.

Ms. Johnson said to bridge gaps or just emergency funding.

Mayor Lyles said right reserve for gaps in funding COVID needs. Ms. Eiselt do you want to talk about \$500,000.

Ms. Eiselt said you know it's hard because I could say take \$50,000 out of 10 different departments right but I think when it boils down to it. One, it's hard to have the conversation after some decisions have been made already. I'll just be honest. If this budget had been presented to us where everybody's salaries were flat, I still think people would have been appreciative of knowing that nobody was going to be laid-off. So, I don't know if that's even up for negotiation now that it's been purposed that everybody get's a 3% pay increase. I don't know what that amounts to. I don't remember if I looked that up or not but at the end of the day, it's what do we prioritize in our retreat last year? We said that mobility and better access to opportunity were our top priority and so I don't have a specific cut, but I would hope that in a budget the size of our budget we could make some adjustments to find \$500,000. Which ultimately is going to be the blueprint for what we say our biggest priority is.

Mayor Lyles said so I'm going to ask the manager. If you say that that's our top priority and he looked at all of the priorities if he'd like to address where that would come from?

Marcus Jones, City Manager said so, there's a bit of a philosophy that we have around this budget. I think it may apply here with the UDO. I believe that we are on track with the Comprehensive plan but there is a question about this additional enhancement which will delay the UDO. So, we started out not looking at this as a core but understanding service with the councilmembers are saying. One of the things that we've done is allowed department heads to have some of these positions that are vacant and as those positions that are vacant, they may be for a certain project or program, but they have the flexibility to change those positions to the highest priority they may have. So, if we start off with a UDO being the highest priority, there is flexibility within Taiwo's budget to try to bring on the resources that are needed. So, I guess what I'm asking the council, is this something that you would like for me to move forward with I'd like to sit down with Patrick Baker because part of it is having any type of legal assistance with it. As well as working with Taiwo within his budget to see if we could come up with something that does not delay the UDO any different from where we are now.

Ms. Eiselt said Mr. Manager could you clarify when you say where we are now because the UDO already has been delayed just as virtue of the pandemic where people can't have public meetings. So, I don't know cumulatively how delayed we are from the very first point a few years ago when we started the UDO and what this \$600,000 cut to the planning department means to the UDO and the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Jones said I'll start off by saying now just means absent moving forward with these additional resources that would not become available until July 1, 2020. So, I now am today. So, I'm not considering the delay with UDO prior to Taiwo and where we are now but an action that this body may approve that may further delay it. What I'm asking is to give us an opportunity to look within resources that Taiwo has in his budget and any type of arrangement we can work with legal to help keep us on the track that we are on right now. Taiwo is in the room and I think he could better answer that.

Mr. Bergman said let me add one thing quickly. I think you had mentioned a cut overall to the planning department. That's actually just to result of the centralization efforts that Mr. Driggs had mentioned earlier. So, IT work will still be done. It's just an accounting thing. It will live in IT rather than planning. So, after you smooth for that, planning did actually go up about 2.7% from last year. With that said there were a few actions with positions related to user fees. To some of that effect.

Mayor Lyles said that's very helpful Ryan. Taiwo did you hear the conversation? Ms. Eiselt would you like to frame the question again now that Taiwo is in the room?

Ms. Eiselt said sure, so of the \$600,000 that was cut from the budget, and I understand the consolidation of the IT function, how does that impact your ability to get the UDO back on track and to move forward visas the expected timeline pre-COVID-19, UDO and Comprehensive Plan?

Taiwo Jaiyeoba, Assistant City Manager said on the Comprehensive Plan we are good because we have good support from the Manager, Mayor, and Council last year. However, because of the Comprehensive Plan goes through adoption in April or May of next year. That also pushed out the Unified Development Ordinance but that was before we knew about COVID-19 and its impact. The request we made was pretty much to support the Unified Development Ordinance and get it to council September, October of 2021. The impact of not being able to have the support will push us out to about 6-8 months of schedule delay. If we were to get the support for the consultant and legal support independent of our legal department, we could probably do it with half of what's on this screen there, about \$250,000 or so with together with what we have been discussing with Manager Jones and Ryan as well our budget director. I think we could get to half of this number and still be able to come out with a good [inaudible] at the end. Ryan explained very clearly the [inaudible] \$600,000. It's not a [inaudible] ask, it's a result of moving something to IT, so we've got some internal process where we can really accommodate that without any problem. It's really what we been discussing internally how we address the UDO. I think we will get there.

Ms. Eiselt said thank you Taiwo, then I would ask to adjust my number to \$250,000.

Items that received 5 or more votes will be considered at the May 27, 2020, Council Budget Adjustments Meeting.

Mayor Lyles said and I want to just follow up and I think what I heard the Manager and Taiwo say that \$250,000 would include legal and outside legal counsel versus having the conversation with the City Attorney about dedicating in-house legal counsel. It could be even less than that. So, I think that that can come back. It might be, but let's just see in terms of where we are. We've gone through the list, and I think everybody is clear on this.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. III: CONSIDERATION OF ANY PROPOSED ADJUSTMENTS

Mayor Lyles said I want to take a couple of minutes if you don't mind. A little bit about what I see. We disagreed on some priorities last January. We talked about mobility and mobility funding. I do want to mention that we have a citizens group led by Harvey Gant, staffed by Taiwo to help us really look at what we need to do to actually make mobility a high priority and I think that, that is absolutely essential to providing equity across our City. In fact, the entire group has looked at equity as one of there guiding principles for the implementation of who do we come about funding. That is from walking, biking, transit, mass transit, trains as well as cars. So, I really feel that as we are moving forward, we are meeting with the mobility and a really good group of recommendations that would come before the council. I want to say, I think the council and the affordable housing, I think is finally getting to a place that we are very much all in agreement on what we are going to do. On safety, we still have a lot to do. I have to say that when I look at what's coming up and if we once get away from what we have been talking about as COVID-19, I think our highest reaction would be to respond to the ongoing increase in gun violence that's going on in the City and the manager has put in violence interrupters but I certainly hope that while we are looking at this budget that we understand that we have not really determined how we can address safety in communities that may need more of a collaborative funding approach than just having policing. I think all of us recognize policing is not enough to make a community safe. I think the thing that is coming up in front of us is resiliency and I say that because we are going to need the confidence of the public if we are going to operate public services with this virus until we have a vaccine, I'm not sure where we are going to be and that is a real concern of mine. As we begin to address things like how we do things whether or not we can actually get our community to understand and have confidence in the services that we deliver. While at the same time I think that this pandemic will require us to look at service changes. We are no different than the private sector, where we are going to have to look for more opportunities to do things in a way that puts our workforce first and making sure that we have the right equipment for them in short term but what services are going to be necessary for the long term as we make adjustments and see adjustments in those that are in front of us. I really

hope that as a City we will work hard to partner with private sectors to continue workforce talent development. I know that the task force is looking at small businesses in the workforce, but we are going to be just as challenged as an organization to do that. We are going to have to respond to upward mobility and the only way that we are going to respond to upward mobility is having it so that people can live and work in the City. They can get to work in a reasonable amount of time in a way that's cost-effective for them and that they will have jobs that pay living wages. Right now, I don't know that if you looked at our overall budget whether or not we've met that goal or challenge. Not just for our workforce but for helping us flourish as we go forward. We've lived a long time on the shoulders of other people that have set financial policies and with our capital investment have helped our city become what it is. But I think we are in a position that we are going to have to equalize the capital investments with our human investments if we are actually going to continue to be the city that people look at and say they will come out of this ahead of anyone else. We say that we have a flat tax rate. We will have a revaluation and three years. That is again something that we all have to think about. If we are going to be resilient, I think that most of our time as an elected group, and I've asked the manager to schedule a retreat, and he talked about October. It really has to focus on what we can do to retain cost and still provide services and still support the businesses and workers in this city because without them we don't succeed. That's really important. I think our biggest challenge is going forward. It's not just today and it's not just the thing we are doing that is on the list right now, but I believe we all need to be thinking about something in October that begins to deal with mobility, safety, resiliency, and housing. Without those things, looking at our own ability I don't know that we could continue to be the city that we want to be and that we are right now. So, its time for a major shift and this budget leaves us in a position I think to be able to have that shift and go forward. So, with that, we can go back to the list but as we are making this list and thinking about what's really going to help us, I hope that people will consider that. Resiliency is just as important, safety, mobility, and housing. All of those are important factors in this discussion.

Councilmember Eiselt said how do we vote on an item that doesn't have the funding next to it though? What are we voting on?

Mayor Lyles said I don't know. I've asked that question. We don't have any funding. Mr. Winston has not suggested funding. He suggested priority. Mr. Winston, would you like to do this dividing it up for \$70,000 or \$500,000, \$250,000? What's your choice?

Councilmember Winston said I'm always a little confused by this because again every other process that we do we give our priority to the staff for them to come back to because our role is not to micro-manage to that point. We give an idea and we ask them how to do we make that work within our budgetary constraints. So, I just don't know how this is any different. I'm not totally sure how the \$70,000 for Historic Preservation Landmark fund will be used but I do agree that if we can bolster that up, we should do it. Just like Ms. Eiselt's plan. I really don't know how that \$250,000 was put together but I trust that staff will figure out how to get those things done.

Councilmember Egleston said if you actually want an answer on mine, I'll give it.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Winston I think that generally what we have done is we ask people if they want to add something, that they actually identify something in the budget because you have a recommended budget. If that's the case if we are not micro-managing, we wouldn't put anything up because we have a balanced budget that the manager has taken an insight over the last twelve months to put together. So, it's kind of like you're putting him in a position of not knowing how far, how much your willing to go to do this and it's just a conceptual thing. Is it \$100,000 to address the digital divide? I expect that if we really want to address the digital divide it would probably be more than \$100,000.

Mr. Winston said sure it could be more than \$100,000 or staff could come up with a \$15,000 initiative to really push something forward.

Mayor Lyles said you can leave it up to the councilmember whether or not to support it as it's defined or not. I think that the money if you knew what you were asking for might

help better define but it's just really up there to all of the council. You can decide yes or no on it. So, I think that Mr. Winston's right. He doesn't have to have a number. I think the question is, the manager will come back and say here's what we have available, and here's how I would recommend it, but I don't think you are required to have a number. I think you just have to have 5 votes to move it forward.

Councilmember Eiselt said but again moving forward means?

Mayor Lyles said the manager takes it and he responds to the request for what you are doing and makes a better definition for it with an amount of money. Then it comes back to us next Wednesday. That would be the final vote. Is everybody on the same page? If I didn't describe that accurately, please let me know.

Mr. Winston said that's the understanding that I was operating under.

Mayor Lyles said it's helpful to have a number, but it's not required.

Votes were taken for the following choices:

Historic Landmark Commission Fund

YEAS: Councilmembers Graham, Winston, Eiselt, Newton, Egleston, Mitchell, and Watlington

Mayor Lyles said that will go forward.

Digital Divide

YEAS: Councilmember Winston, Eiselt, Newton, Egleston, Mitchell, Ajmera, Watlington, and Johnson

Mayor Lyles said that will go forward

Election-Day Support, Day off for Employees, and or Mailing Absentee Ballots

YEAS: Councilmembers Winston and Johnson

Mayor Lyles said only one vote. That will not go forward.

Ms. Eiselt said can I ask, if it's alright with Mr. Winston, that we split the two because it's two different costs associated with mail out ballots and a whole day off?

Mayor Lyles said I just got a letter asking me if I wanted a mail-out ballot. I don't know if we have the ability by law to mail out an absentee ballot. I just got a letter from the board of elections saying would you like an absentee ballot. Here is the letter to send back in.

Mr. Graham said I think that's a county process. So, I'm not sure we could even do it.

Mayor Lyles said I'm not sure we could do it either.

Mr. Winston said yes, that was part of the request; it was an and/or. The staff would bring us back to recommendations, but you don't need to be a government entity or any entity to mail out an application on an absentee ballot. We wouldn't be mailing out absentee ballots. Your right, that is from the board of elections, but individuals have to fill out the forms just like the Mayor was saying. This would just be to encourage people to participate in the civic process. It has nothing to do with a jurisdiction issue at all.

Mayor Johnson said can I just add to that? The way that I understood it also Mr. Winston it's just an initiative or a push because we don't know where we going to be on election day. We know there has to be some priority or some focus or some planning to make

sure that people are able to get out and vote. So, that's what I'm supporting that we know that it's a priority and we have got to look at alternatives.

Ms. Watlington said so, this is not just execution dollars?

Mayor Lyles said there are no dollars attached to it. The request was election day support, a day off for employees, or mail out absentee ballots. That's what we have.

Ms. Watlington said I could bet behind marketing and saying ok this is important, but I can't get behind.

Ms. Eiselt said I agree.

Mayor Lyles said I had two people in support of election-day support. So, that does not move forward.

UDO and Vision Plan Support for \$250,000

YEAS: Councilmembers Eiselt, Ajmera, Newton, Egleston, Mitchell, Driggs, and Watlington

Mayor Lyles said that will go forward

No Changes Until the End of the Pandemic

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Johnson, Bokhari, and Driggs

Mayor Lyles said this will not go forward. The three that would go forward are the Historic District, the funding for the UDO, and the Digital Divide.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. IV: NEXT STEPS

Mayor Lyles said is there any other discussion on the budget before our next meeting which is Wednesday when we will vote on those three items and then we always have a preliminary vote to give direction to the Manager to prepare the budget with the changes that will be approved by the majority?

* * * * *

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember Egleston, seconded by Councilmember Watlington, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:32 p.m.



Stephanie C. Kelly, City Clerk, MMC, NCCMC

Length of Meeting: 1 Hour, 24 Minutes
Minutes Completed: May 20, 2020