



Minutes of the Roanoke Rapids City Council

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on **Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.** in the Council Chambers at the Lloyd Andrews City Meeting Hall.

Present: Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor
Sandra W. Bryant, Mayor Pro Tem

W. Keith Bell) **Council Members**
Andy Jackson)
Rex Stainback)
Curtis Strickland)

Kelly Traynham, City Manager
Geoffrey Davis, City Attorney
Traci Storey, City Clerk
Carmen Johnson, Finance Director
Ashley Thomas, Main Street Director
Kristyn Anderson, Planning & Development Director
Kelly Daughtry, Parks & Recreation Director
Richard Cook, Fire Chief
Larry Chalker, Public Works Director
Adam Salmon, Police Captain

Absent: Lawrence Wiggins, Police Chief
Christina Caudle, Human Resources Director

Mayor Doughtie called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Mayor Doughtie provided the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Adoption of Business Agenda

Mayor Doughtie stated there were a couple of changes that needed to be made to the meeting agenda: Item 6 a) needed to be tabled until another meeting and Item 6 g) needed to be removed from the agenda. He asked Council members if there were any known conflicts of interest with respect to the matters before them this evening and called for a motion to adopt the meeting agenda with those amendments.

There being no conflicts, motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Councilman Bell, and unanimously carried to amend the agenda by tabling Item 6a) to a later date and removing Item 6 g).

Public Comment (Scheduled)

Ephraim Brodsky

Mr. Brodsky stated he would like to speak about deferred maintenance. They are now in January 2026 and in June of 2025 they were told that there was going to be a five-year plan that was going to be presented to the citizens. They are now seven months into that five-year plan, and they have not heard anything. He would like to hear from the City what he thinks everybody else would like to hear which is the plan for deferred maintenance. He has only been living here for four years and every single year when you look at the City Council minutes you see a recurring theme of deferred maintenance. It's being talked about, projects are delayed, they can't fund them, the roads need to be repaired, the buildings need to be repaired, they have buildings that need to be demolished all over town, not just on the avenue, and they don't have the money to do it. He asked how will they do it, what's the plan. They are seven months into that five years and they haven't heard about it.

He said deferred maintenance is not a four-letter word, it's the practice of postponing necessary maintenance and repairs. These are things that need to be done, these aren't optional endeavors. He thinks today is a great time to talk about this because today the State was out on 10th Street making repairs to the road. They were doing something called sealing cracks which is part of road maintenance. Every three years they are supposed to go out and seal all the cracks because if the cracks are not sealed the roads become flooded, washed over, and more difficult to repair. He doesn't see them doing much of that. He asked the Public Works Director last year if they had a maintenance schedule for the roads or if there was a master list they could look at. He said no, they didn't have something like that because they didn't have a lot of funds, they were relying on the Powell Bill to repair the roads, and the Powell Bill is about \$600,000 a year. That \$600,000 a year doesn't go that far when you're covering 91 miles of roads they were responsible for in the city limits. That's what separates the City from the County, the County is not responsible for road maintenance; the City is and they are not taking care of the roads.

Mr. Brodsky said they were also not taking care of their buildings. One of the things that makes this community proud is their youth sports. Parents of school-aged children spend a lot of time at the ball fields, a lot of time in recreation facilities and all of them are falling apart. Yet they have great athletic programs, mostly run by volunteers. They used to all be run by the City, 30 or 40 years ago. Slowly they've just

been kicking them to the curb because there's no money to fund this or that. Let's cut one more service, let's cut some more. Then they talk about attrition, about people moving away, about people not wanting to move back and they think why is that happening? Could it have something to do with all the deferred maintenance with all the cuts? He gets they live in rural eastern North Carolina, there's not a lot of money and they don't have Rocky Mount's budget. Rocky Mount has a \$300 million budget and the City's budget is \$18-19 million dollars, not a lot of room there. They don't have a lot of funding mechanisms to make money in the town. They don't control the water, they don't control the electricity, so their funding mechanism is predominantly their ad valorem property taxes and whatever they get from the state, county, and federal government. There is room, they have some things that they can cut and they won't lose anything. In fact, the City's largest expense of the \$19.8 million budget was public safety. Right after him there's going to be somebody that's going to come up here, a first responder that is going to ask them for money. They spent 40% of the approved budget for June toward public safety. That is almost all the ad valorem they get. He asked where that leaves them, were they a public safety-first town. They need to take drastic action in the budget to address their deferred maintenance. They need to look at the parks, recreation facilities, and the roads. The roads are very important. The citizens need to see their elected officials acknowledge this. They need to see the conditions and to report on them. They need to hear about that. They want to know what the vision and the plan is for all of these things; to get the facilities up to date. TJ Davis, where his kids play rec basketball, has no air conditioning, no working heater, they have an industrial fan that's supposed to suck the air out and it hasn't worked in three years. The front door is broken and has been broken for six weeks now. The paint is chipping and there's holes in the roof. When you walk around the track on top you can see them. He asked if they want to just be a law enforcement, first responder community or do they want to show their dedication to the education health, wellness and enrichment of their town.

Timothy Pittman

Mr. Pittman, Commander of the Roanoke Valley Rescue Squad, said the Roanoke Valley Rescue Squad respectfully submits this statement in support of increasing the current rescue tax from one cent (1¢) to five cents (5¢) in the next five years. To ensure the continued ability of the Roanoke Valley Rescue Squad to provide high-quality emergency rescue services, we propose a gradual increase of the rescue tax to a total of 5¢ “that is only an additional 4 cent on our current rate”, gradually over five years. This phased approach minimizes financial impact on residents while providing stable, predictable funding for critical life-saving operations. This adjustment is necessary to ensure the continued ability of the Rescue Squad to meet the growing emergency service needs of the community while maintaining safe, professional, and reliable operations. The Roanoke Valley Rescue Squad short term goal is to add an

additional 2 cent to the current tax and gradually increase the rescue tax to 5 cent over the next five years as a long-term goal. The 2-cent additional tax would go toward replacing the current 21-year-old heavy rescue truck, so that the Roanoke Valley Rescue Squad could better service the community of the City of Roanoke Rapids.

He reported during calendar year 2025, the Roanoke Valley Rescue Squad responded to a total of 1,079 emergency calls, demonstrating the significant and reliability of the community places on rescue services. 3.6% of these calls were answered in the County of Halifax with 96.4% of these calls being answered in the city limits of Roanoke Rapids. These calls included:

- 748 First Responder / Medical Assist Calls
- 206 Motor Vehicle Accidents
- 8 Vehicle Extrications
- 68 Calls Assisting the Roanoke Rapids Fire Department
- 39 Backup Ambulance Calls for Halifax County
- 2 Water Rescue Calls
- 1 Search and Rescue Call
- 6 Standby Assignments for Community Events
- 1 cancelled while en-route

Mr. Pittman said these numbers reflect not only the volume of calls but also the complexity and risk involved in many of the incidents. Motor vehicle accidents and extrications require specialized equipment, extensive training, and coordinated multi-agency responses. Medical first responder calls demand rapid response times and properly maintained medical equipment. As these calls increase, so do the operational costs associated with responding safely and effectively.

He stated the current 1¢ rescue tax no longer provides sufficient funding to support modern rescue operations. Costs for emergency services have risen significantly over the years, including:

- Replacement and maintenance of rescue vehicles
- Extrication and stabilization equipment
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Medical supplies
- Training for rescue personnel
- Fuel, insurance, and routine operational expenses

He said while the Rescue Squad continues to operate responsibly and efficiently, the existing funding level limits the ability to replace aging equipment, plan for future

needs, and maintain readiness without relying heavily on grants and fundraising. The Roanoke Valley Rescue Squad has reached out to the County of Halifax to try and get funding from them, with little help and being directed toward grant programs that the County offers. Grant funding, while helpful, is not guaranteed and should not be the primary means of sustaining essential public safety services.

Mr. Pittman stated the Roanoke Valley Rescue Squad remains committed to serving the community with professionalism, dedication, and accountability. However, the current funding model is no longer sustainable given the rising call volume and increasing operational demands. Raising the rescue tax from 1¢ to 5¢ gradually over the next five years is a responsible and necessary step to ensure the continued protection of the citizens and visitors of the Roanoke Valley. By approving this increase in the short term of an additional 2 cent on the current tax rate and gradually to 5 cent in the next five years, the City Council will be making a direct investment in public safety, responder readiness, and the well-being of the community as a whole. When emergencies occur, citizens expect help to arrive quickly, equipped, and prepared. This tax increase helps ensure that expectations continue to be met.

Public Comment (Unscheduled)

Joey Davis

Mr. Davis said he was first going to congratulate the guy from the *Daily Herald* for putting the article in the newspaper about the gas prices around here. He sees they went up 30 cents a gallon today, so much for that. He tells people that he comes to these meetings, he signs up, he speaks up, he talks. People don't want to come up here, but he tells them it's better to come up here and speak your mind, use their mouth, and don't let your fingers do the talking on Facebook. The last thing, he was not at the last meeting, and he heard a word that he had to play the meeting back over. It was called code enforcement. He didn't know that existed in Roanoke Rapids. This house at 100 Hamilton Street, he knew the people that lived there and his daughter spent a lot of her childhood there. The house is in bad shape, the windows are out and the roof has fallen in, but he can carry them to other places around Roanoke Rapids that are the same way. That house on Hamilton, why don't they put some caution tape up there and block that street off or any other place like that in town. They are sort of picking and choosing houses in town to him when that block downtown has a theatre and another building halfway down on that side, and the corner building has been closed off for two years where the windows are out and the roof is collapsed and nothing is done about it. He thinks something needs to be done about that also. It reminds him of an old song; somebody's got a hold of somebody.

Approval of City Council Minutes

Motion was made by Councilman Strickland, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant and unanimously carried to approve the December 16, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting minutes as drafted.

New Business

Consideration of Order to Demolish and Remove Dwelling (100 Hamilton Street)

Code Enforcement Officer Roger Bell stated it gave him no pleasure to bring this item before them this evening. 100 Hamilton Street is a historically significant property. He has been told it is the oldest residential dwelling in the city. It is known as the turtleback house. He said the roof is collapsing and that commands attention. He made a presentation with photos showing the condition of the property and reviewed the process and timeline of events listed in the following report:

January 13, 2026

To: Kelly Traynham, City Manager

From: Roger Bell, Minimum Housing /Code Enforcement Officer

Re: 100 Hamilton St. (Parcel# 0900927): ORDER TO DEMOLISH AND REMOVE DWELLING

The following is provided as a chronological order of events concerning the above referenced property:

- **March 29, 2023** – Formal process begins with dwelling after complaints over the house's condition.
- **March 29, 2023** – Research shows the property is owned by Josephine Balmer, heirs. **The address is listed as the property itself.**
- **April 26, 2023** – Hearing notice sent. Legal notice sent to news media.
- **May 22, 2023** – Notice of Lis Pendens filed with the Halifax County Clerk of Court.
- **May 23, 2023** – **Hearing held at the property at 100 Hamilton St, attended by Code Enforcement Officer Roger Bell and Cody Carter of the city's Public Works Department.**
- **May 23, 2023** – The Findings of Fact document was sent with an Order that the owner shall bring the dwelling into compliance with the Minimum Housing Code by demolishing and removing the dwelling from the property or by repairing, altering or by improving the structure to correct all of the conditions and deficiencies noted in the attached Exhibit A by a date not later than the **23rd day of June, 2023**. Mailing is by Certified and Regular mail to the owner. The notice was posted to the dwelling. Tax value of the building is found to be **\$4,200** with the cost of repairs exceeding **\$70,000**.
- No contact has been made with owners or heirs during this entire process. All correspondence has been returned as undelivered.

- **The 2025 assessed tax value for this dwelling is \$300.**
- **There is \$9,961.50 owed to the city for nuisance abatement at this address.**
- **There are \$13,898.12 owed in taxes on this property. Records indicate taxes have not been paid since 2011.**

Staff Recommendation

We have determined the dwelling to be in a **Dilapidated** condition as defined by the Minimum Housing Code. The staff has properly accomplished the required procedures, and the owner has failed to comply with the Official's Order.

Ordinance 2026.01 includes the following acknowledgements and actions:

- City Council finds that the dwelling is dilapidated and unfit for human habitation under the provisions of the Housing Code and that all procedures have been complied with; and
- The dwelling should be demolished; and
- The owner of the dwelling has been given a reasonable opportunity to bring the dwelling up to the standards of the Housing Code; and
- North Carolina General Statute 160D-1203 and Chapter 152 of the Roanoke Rapids City Code of Ordinances empowers the City to demolish a dwelling when the Order for repair has not been complied with; and
- Directs the Code Enforcement Officer to demolish and remove the property as unfit for human habitation; and
- All costs incurred by the City to demolish and remove the dwelling shall constitute a lien against the real property; and
- If the owner should either demolish and remove the dwelling or make the required repairs prior to the time of scheduled demolition, then the City Manager is authorized to rescind this demolition order without further action; and
- The Ordinance shall become effective immediately after its adoption.

Requested Action

We are requesting City Council adopt Ordinance 2026.01 directing the Code Enforcement Officer to demolish and remove the dwelling located at 100 Hamilton Street, Roanoke Rapids, N. C. with a lien to be placed against the real property upon which the costs of removal are incurred.

Mayor Doughtie asked in the event that someone had tried to take occupation of it, would there be any way that the \$23,000 could go away without having to pay it. Attorney Davis replied if it was a tax lien, then no. The City could work on the nuisance abatement fees, but as far as the tax aspect, no.

Mayor Doughtie stated with a situation like that, the law is the law so that pretty much puts it where nobody's going to step out. Attorney Davis added the tax liens exceed the value of the property. Mayor Doughtie said it would be cheaper to reconstruct it than to rehabilitate it. He also asked why it takes this long to get to this point.

Attorney Davis said Code Enforcement Officer Bell has done a fantastic job presenting this to City Council tonight. He added that the City does not go after tax liens, Halifax County does that. They administer the taxes for the City so they make the decisions on when to foreclose on property and attempt to collect on those tax liens. He suspects the reason they haven't done it in this case is because it's a complete losing proposition. The only way that they could collect all those liens is through a foreclosure sale and given the state of the property as it's been demonstrated today, nobody is going to buy that property for anything near those tax liens. From the County's perspective they have other things to focus on.

He said he has lived in Roanoke Rapids most of my life and has known about this house. It is a shame to see something that really is a historic property, not just from a legal designation, but because everyone knows it is the oldest residence in Roanoke Rapids. There comes a point where you have to move past the sentimental connections and go ahead and resolve these matters. Going back to something Mr. Davis said, he thinks there could be some confusion amongst the public when you don't deal with this type of thing every day with respect to this residence. They may ask why you can't do the same thing to the building on the corner of Roanoke Avenue and 2nd Street or some of these other business buildings. He explained the distinction in this case is because it is a minimum housing thing so that is specifically with residential property. Also, the amount of costs involved in taking a structure like this down is going to be a lot less of a cost to the City than a large building that may have asbestos or other things in it. The City is never able to materially collect on them unless somebody were to come out once the lot is cleared and buys the lot and pays off the liens. From a financial standpoint it doesn't seem like something feasible for someone to do. It ends up being a loss for the City to the extent it never gets reimbursed.

Mayor Doughtie said they should have foreclosed on it before it got into such bad shape. On the other hand, instead of letting it get in the shape it's in now and has such high taxes on it, if they had taken it down 5 or 10 years ago; it doesn't take much now to get \$100,000 to \$150,000 on the tax books. There is a way to recoup that money if they get a dwelling on it. Another thing is those lots are very narrow. At one point you couldn't build on one of the mill house lots unless you had two lots. A single lot was typically 30 feet, and a double lot was 100 feet. He didn't know if they could change zoning or code so people could build back on those lots.

Attorney Davis said as far as doing this earlier, this property has obviously deteriorated since those tax liens started to accrue. The earlier you move back in that process the less deterioration you have. There comes a point where you cross a line where you have a minimum housing code violation and before that point they cannot

use these procedures to go after that. It's just tax liens in that situation and that is really for the Halifax County tax office to go after.

City Manager Traynham asked to speak to the history on the property. Code Enforcement Officer Bell indicated that he started in 2023 kind of slowly taking this forward. When she was hired by the City in 2011 as the Planning and Development Director, they were told do not touch the turtleback house; they were expecting someone to come in and fix it up. Since 2011 they still haven't had anyone step up to the plate to do anything voluntarily to improve the property so it has deteriorated over time. As part of the process and the legal due diligence as required, they did run into some issues prior to 2023 where the status of the owner by name was unknown and they were unable to find a death certificate in the records. The presentation of an ordinance is the final step in what can often be years of research and duty to inform heirs and inform owners to try and get someone to do something with it. Unfortunately, it has not been rescued.

Attorney Davis said that is something when dealing with condemnation of property and tax foreclosures and things such as that. A lot of people don't realize that you must provide notice even in an *in rem* proceeding to the actual landowners. He has seen, especially with heir property for tax foreclosure actions the County has done, where the list parties they have to give notice, go down one page and go on to a second page. By that point there's so many heirs and it's been split up so much it just has that many people who may have some kind of possessory interest that they have to cover before they take it. Whether it is through this process under the minimum housing code, tax foreclosure or any of those things where you're going to affect the piece of property and exercise control over it, they have to make sure that you identify the actual owners. Sometimes that can be difficult in derelict properties. It is relatively easy for a piece of property that somebody's living in. Usually, they have an interest because they own the property or they're paying rent to somebody that owns the property. When you have a derelict property like this that can serve as an initial impediment and delay things. It can't delay it eternally, but it does add to the difficulty of doing these things.

City Manager Traynham called City Council's attention to Section 5 of Ordinance 2026.01. It states that in the opinion of the code enforcement officer, if the owner has rehabilitated the dwelling to the extent that it meets or exceeds the requirements of the minimum housing code, then the City Council has the right to rescind this demolition ordinance. She wanted to make the message clear that if there's someone out there that really wants to rehab or take care of this property, they are willing to allow the time to make that happen. The approval of this ordinance just gives the City the authority to move forward to determine what the expenses of demolition might be. Meanwhile in the last several years, the Police Department has continued

to get phone calls about children entering the property and that is a significant concern.

Attorney Davis said another thing about demolition liens such as this is that it is treated as a special assessment. What that means is that it has a lower dignity than something like a grass cutting lien or a lien for taxes. For instance, if the County ended up foreclosing on it collecting \$20,000 and the taxes are in excess of that, they would get all that money. The City doesn't even get a percentage of it because of the special assessment of a lesser dignity. Even the City's grass cutting liens are treated as a higher dignity than a special assessment lien. It's an odd construction of North Carolina law, but that's the way it is.

Mayor Doughtie stated it sounds like they need to try and get the Legislature to make some changes. Attorney Davis said he would love to see the City's demolition liens to be the same as a county tax lien.

Mayor Doughtie asked if somebody took the building and made it a museum, not for people to inhabit, but for people to just walk through; would the codes be as restrictive if nobody is living in it and it's just open for a certain time frame. He knows it has to be safe.

Attorney Davis replied nobody would be walking through it any time soon. He said they could evaluate that when the time comes. There are zoning issues, but there would likely need to be a change in the use of that property that would have to come before City Council, but it could be possible.

Mayor Doughtie said he believes everyone on Council has been to areas where there are quite a few houses that are in bad shape. In the past couple of years there have been houses, maybe not quite as bad as this one, that people have spent a lot of money on and they look nice now. He was sure once they are reevaluated, they are in a higher tax bracket plus they are giving people a nicer place to live in.

Attorney Davis said he shares the City Manager's opinion that if somebody were to decide to get involved in this and contact the City, they would try to be as helpful as they could.

Mayor Doughtie said they probably need to do a better job letting people know about something like this because maybe if someone had known about this property 3-5 years ago, they may have been able to patch it up a little better and kept it from getting in such bad shape. Mayor Doughtie called for a motion on the ordinance.

ORDINANCE 2026.01

ORDINANCE DIRECTING THE CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER TO DEMOLISH AND REMOVE PROPERTY AS UNFIT FOR HUMAN HABITATION AND DIRECTING THAT A NOTICE BE PLACED THEREON THAT THE SAME MAY NOT BE OCCUPIED:

100 Hamilton Street, Roanoke Rapids, N. C. Parcel# 0900927

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids finds that the dwelling described herein is dilapidated and unfit for human habitation under the provisions of the Housing Code, and that all of the procedures of the Code of the City of Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, have been complied with; and

WHEREAS, this dwelling should be removed or demolished, as directed by the Code Enforcement Official, and should be placarded by placing thereon a notice prohibiting the use for human habitation, in that the costs of repairs needed to bring it into compliance with the minimum housing code exceeds **50%** of the current value of the dwelling; and

WHEREAS, the owner of this dwelling has been given a reasonable opportunity to bring the dwelling up to the standards of the Housing Code pursuant to an Order issued by the Code Enforcement Official and the owner has failed to comply with the lawful Order of the Code Enforcement Official to repair or demolish the property within the time therein described; and

WHEREAS, G. S. 160D-1203 and Chapter 152 of the Code of the City of Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, empowers the City of Roanoke Rapids to have its Code Enforcement Official to remove or demolish a dwelling when an Order of the Code Enforcement Official has not been complied with;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids that:

Section 1. The Code Enforcement Official is hereby authorized and directed to place a placard containing the legend:

“This building is unfit for human habitation; the use or occupation of this building for human habitation is prohibited and unlawful.”

on the building located at **100 Hamilton Street**, in the City of Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina.

Section 2. The Code Enforcement Official is hereby authorized and directed to vacate the dwelling of all occupants and to remove or demolish the dwelling, said dwelling being located at **100 Hamilton Street** in the City of Roanoke Rapids North Carolina, and owned by **Josephine R. Balmer**. In accordance with the Order of the Code Enforcement Official issued pursuant to the Minimum Housing Ordinance contained in Chapter 152 of the Code of the City of Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina.

Section 3. (a) The cost of removal or demolition shall constitute a lien against the real property upon which the cost was incurred. The lien shall be filed in the office of the City Tax Collector, and shall have the same priority and be collected in the same manner as the lien for special assessments in Article 10 of G. S. Chapter 160A.

- (b) Upon completion of the required removal or demolition, the Building Inspector shall sell the materials of the dwelling and credit the proceeds against the cost of removal or demolition. The Code Enforcement Official shall certify the remaining balance to the Tax Collector. If a surplus remains after sale of the materials and satisfaction of the cost of removal or demolition, the Code Enforcement Official shall deposit the surplus in the Superior Court where it shall be secured and disbursed in the manner provided by G. S. 160D-1125.

Section 4. It shall be unlawful for any person to remove or cause to be removed the placard from any building to which it is affixed. It shall likewise be unlawful for any person to occupy or to permit the occupancy of any building therein declared to be unfit for human habitation.

Section 5. **If the owner of the property should either demolish the dwelling at their own expense, or if, in the opinion of the code enforcement officer, the owner has rehabilitated the dwelling to the extent that it meets or exceeds the requirements of the minimum housing code prior to the time scheduled for demolition under this ordinance, then the City Manager is authorized to rescind this demolition order without further action by the City Council.**

Section 6. This Ordinance shall become effective **immediately** after its adoption.

City of Roanoke Rapids

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Motion was made by Councilman Jackson, seconded by Councilman Bell, and unanimously carried to adopt Ordinance No. 2026.01 directing the Code Enforcement Officer to demolish and remove the dwelling located at 100 Hamilton Street, Roanoke Rapids, NC with a lien to be placed against the real property upon which the costs of removal are incurred.

Consideration of Ordinance No. 2026.02 (Donation to Police Department)

Finance Director Johnson said Tractor Supply made a donation to the Police Department in the amount of \$250. She presented the following budget ordinance:

**Ordinance No. 2026.02
CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS
BUDGET AMENDMENT**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS:

SECTION 1. The following additional amounts are hereby appropriated for the operation of City Government and its activities for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE A – PROJECT FUND REVENUES

Police Dept. – Donations to the Police Dept – Tractor Supply Project Revenues – Police Dept.	<u>\$250.00</u>
FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$250.00

SECTION 2. The following additional revenues and reductions in appropriations are available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026, in order to meet the foregoing appropriations, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE B – PROJECT FUND EXPENDITURES

Police Dept. – Donations to the Police Dept. – Tractor Supply Project Expenditures – Police Dept.	<u>\$250.00</u>
FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$250.00

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant, seconded by Councilman Stainback, and unanimously carried to adopt Ordinance No. 2026.02 in the amount of \$250.00 for a donation to the Police Department.

Consideration of Ordinance No. 2026.03 (Donation to Fire Department)

Finance Director Johnson said Tractor Supply also made a donation to the Fire Department in the amount of \$250. She presented the following budget ordinance:

**Ordinance No. 2026.03
CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS
BUDGET AMENDMENT**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS:

SECTION 1. The following additional amounts are hereby appropriated for the operation of City Government and its activities for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE A – PROJECT FUND REVENUES

Fire Dept. – Donations to the Fire Dept. – Tractor Supply Project Revenues – Fire Dept.	<u>\$250.00</u>
FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$250.00

SECTION 2. The following additional revenues and reductions in appropriations are available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026, in order to meet the foregoing appropriations, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE B – PROJECT FUND EXPENDITURES

Fire Dept. – Donations to the Fire Dept. – Tractor Supply Project Expenditures – Fire Dept.	<u>\$250.00</u>
FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$250.00

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Motion was made by Councilman Strickland, seconded by Councilman Jackson, and unanimously carried to adopt Ordinance No. 2026.03 in the amount of \$250.00 for a donation to the Fire Department.

Consideration of Ordinance No. 2026.04 (AFG FEMA Grant)

Finance Director Johnson said the Fire Department was awarded funding from the AFG FEMA Grant in the amount of \$6,366.53. She presented the following budget ordinance:

**Ordinance No. 2026.04
CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS
BUDGET AMENDMENT**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS:

SECTION 1. The following additional amounts are hereby appropriated for the operation of City Government and its activities for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE A – PROJECT FUND REVENUES

Fire Dept. Grant – AFG FEMA Go Grant Project Revenues – Fire Dept.	\$6,366.53
FUND PROJECT TOTAL	<u>\$6,366.53</u>

SECTION 2. The following additional revenues and reductions in appropriations are available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026, in order to meet the foregoing appropriations, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE B – PROJECT FUND EXPENDITURES

Fire Dept. Grant – AFG FEMA Go Grant Project Expenditures – Fire Dept.	\$6,366.53
FUND PROJECT TOTAL	<u>\$6,366.53</u>

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant, seconded by Councilman Stainback, and unanimously carried to adopt Ordinance No. 2026.04 in the amount of \$6,366.53 for the AFG FEMA Grant awarded to the Fire Department.

Consideration of Ordinance No. 2026.05 (SHIIP Grant – Senior Center)

Finance Director Johnson said the Senior Center received SHIIP Grant funds in the amount of \$5,067.00. She presented the following budget ordinance:

**Ordinance No. 2026.05
CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS
BUDGET AMENDMENT**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS:

SECTION 1. The following additional amounts are hereby appropriated for the operation of City Government and its activities for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE A – PROJECT FUND REVENUES

P&R – Senior Center – SHIIP Grant Project Revenues - P&R	\$5,067.00
FUND PROJECT TOTAL	<u>\$5,067.00</u>

SECTION 2. The following additional revenues and reductions in appropriations are available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026, in order to meet the foregoing appropriations, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE B – PROJECT FUND EXPENDITURES

P&R – Senior Center – SHIIP Grant Project Expenditures - P&R	\$5,067.00
FUND PROJECT TOTAL	<u>\$5,067.00</u>

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Motion was made by Councilman Bell, seconded by Councilman Jackson, and unanimously carried to adopt Ordinance No. 2026.05 in the amount of \$5,067.00 for SHIIP Grant funds awarded to the Senior Center.

Consideration of Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget Calendar

City Manager Traynham said as they have completed audit preparation for FY2025, it is time to start planning for Fiscal Year 2027. She called City Council’s attention to the budget calendar enclosed in their packets which sets forth a timeline or time frame of goals and expectations for progressing through the stages of development of the budget for the fiscal year that begins on July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027. The first step being that all department heads prepare their budgets and submit those for review. She and the Finance Director will sit down and review those internally. At some point they receive some information from the State about how to estimate and what to estimate for on their other revenues. They would review the requests and proposed budgets with the City Council members which it is proposed to take place in late March and early April. Then they make final budget revisions.

She stated according to this calendar, and these dates can be modified, they propose to present the recommended budget and message to the City Council on May 5th and hold a public hearing on May 19th. June 2nd would be the proposed date for adoption of the budget with June 16th being an alternate date for approval or if additional time is needed. The Fiscal Year 2027 budget would have to be adopted no later than June the 30, 2026 to move forward with the new fiscal year. She asked for their consideration to accept the FY2027 Budget Calendar as proposed.

Motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant, and unanimously carried to accept the City of Roanoke Rapids Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget Calendar.

City Manager's Report

City Manager Traynham reminded City Council that the HCIA meeting hosted by the Town of Weldon will be held Wednesday, January 28, 2026, in the Griffin Center at Halifax Community College.

She provided the following updates from City Administration:

- On Wednesday, January 7, Police Chief Lawrence Wiggins was recognized at Nash Community College for successfully completing the requirements prescribed by NC Criminal Justice Training & Education Standards Commission to receive his State of NC Law Enforcement Certification. Since beginning his employment with the city last March, Chief Wiggins has been lawfully working under a probationary certification. Please join us in Congratulating Chief Wiggins for his dedicated efforts and successful completion! This week, Chief Wiggins is attending the NC Association of Police Chiefs Conference and will return on Friday.
- **Cybersecurity Improvements | “.gov” Email Migration:** Effective Monday, January 12, the City of Roanoke Rapids initiated email migration from “.com” to “.gov” as an activity funded under the awarded FY24 State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP). City-assigned email addresses are updated to a .gov extension while maintaining migration from .com for a five-year period to ensure a seamless transition. At some point they will be updating the City’s website to .gov extension as well. These activities are part of the grant program and must be completed by the end of the calendar year 2027.
- **Emry Skate Park** – Concrete work is complete and an official grand opening will be announced upon completion of necessary site work including the installation of lighting by Dominion Energy, fencing (*one section is being donated*), and facility signage. She commended the community for their fundraising efforts to help make this project happen.
- The Office of State Fire Marshal under the NC Dept. of Insurance (NCDOI) conducted an **Insurances Services Office (ISO) Survey** of our Fire Department on Tuesday, January 13. The survey is conducted every five (5) years to evaluate department operations, water supply and distribution,

emergency communications and efforts to prevent and reduce fire risk. The Survey will result in a public protection rating that impacts insurance premiums for residential and business properties. She noted the last ISO survey resulted in an improved score, and she was hopeful to maintain if not improve the score. She thanked the Planning & Development staff for their assistance with records as well as the Fire Department staff for their work along with the Roanoke Rapids Sanitary District and Halifax County Communications.

- The first in-person **Main Street Committee Meeting** was held on Monday, January 12, 2026. The Committee welcomed special guest Charles Halsall, state Main Street Program Specialist who led an economic asset inventory exercise as “successful economic development is about what you do have.” In upcoming months, a spring event will be planned, a 5-year strategic plan will be developed, and the state will take professional photos and videos of all NC Main Street communities. The next meeting will be held on Monday, February 9 at City Hall.
- **Regional YMCA Exploratory Meeting** – an informative meeting was held on January 8th in Northampton County with representatives from multiple counties and municipalities. There appears to be interest in locating a regional YMA to the area; located would need to be determined. Attendees learned that starting a YMCA requires strong local partnerships and significant fundraising. The initial steps require the establishment of an exploratory committee to lead in the initiation of a 3rd party feasibility study and community needs survey, cost estimated in range of \$25k to \$35k. One of the key needs heard in the meeting, especially from residents of Northampton County, was access to a swimming pool.
- On January 27th at 10:30 AM, the Halifax County Health Department will conduct Health Education programming at the Senior Center.
- City Staff continue to pursue reimbursement funds from NC State Emergency Management for May 2025 windstorm damage. Approximately 2,070 cubic yards of processed debris remains to be hauled out. Additional funds may be necessary to complete this effort. The City collected and processed 12,052 cubic yards of downed trees and limbs in aftermath of event. They had a budget amendment staff had prepared for action tonight, but they are regrouping some of those numbers to get a good idea of those final costs. They will bring that back to them soon. Costs currently exceed the allocated \$250k for the clean-up of the storm.
- **Collegiate Summer Baseball League | Old North State League (ONSL)**. They are still working to finalize a one-year agreement. A facility use and lease agreement is actively being negotiated by parties for the 2026 Summer League at Doyle Field (TJ Davis Athletic Complex). The term of the initial agreement is for one year with a proposed multi-year renewal subject to approval by City Council in accordance with NCGS 160A-272. Priority use of Doyle Field is afforded to Roanoke Rapids High School and Roanoke Rapids Youth Baseball Association. Games are tentatively scheduled to begin late May and conclude around August 1. The Tidewater Division includes teams from New Bern, Outer Banks, Elizabeth City, Edenton and Tarboro. All players are current collegiate athletes representing multiple states.
- **America 250 Halifax County, NC** – Throughout 2026, North Carolina will recognize its prelude to independence celebrating the 250th anniversary of Halifax Resolves, signed in Halifax on April 12,

1776. The Halifax Resolves are generally considered the first official act of any colony for independence from Great Britain. Halifax 250 merchandise is available for purchase online and at local retailers with proceeds to support education and celebrations. All are encouraged to wear Red, White, and Blue on Fridays throughout 2026 in support of the events. More info is available at www.visithalifax.com/250.

- Canal Walk Subdivision: 20 building permits issued, four homes now completed, 16 in progress. The City is seeing an uptick in permitting and inspections compared to previous years.

City Manager Traynham stated she had planned to present 2025 accomplishments to City Council tonight but will present them in the February meeting. She announced that during the 2025 calendar year, the Planning Department issued 113 permits, and the construction value of those permits was over \$18M. They have also seen a surge in single-family residential development. Building inspectors have completed more inspections this past year than any year since 2008. This is good news for the City.

She reported the street pavement management study is underway. The firm that has been retained to complete the inventory through the City's Powell Bill eligible funding started this month and the results will be presented to City Council.

Mayor Doughtie asked City Manager Traynham to contact Mr. Brodsky since he had inquired about that in his comments earlier in the meeting.

Mayor Doughtie asked Planning & Development Director Anderson if she could tell City Council about the housing project on Hwy. 125.

Planning & Development Director Anderson stated for some time they have heard her talk about the developments at Cross Creek Parkway. She was happy to report they are finally coming to fruition. One of the development owners, Takata Lake Development, is in the process of starting their development. They may see some culverts and construction entrances for 82 single-family dwellings. It may take some time as they need to do some street construction. This is a project the City collaborated with developers, engineers, NCDOT and Halifax County; everyone came to the table to make this happen.

Mayor Doughtie asked if she knew the square footage. She replied she did not know at this point because they just have the lots set up for the development. The building permits should come in soon, but right now they are focusing on the site and getting lots set up.

Mayor Doughtie confirmed that the development property was within the city limits. She replied that was correct.

City Manager Traynham added that within the subdivision of Cross Creek there was some talk from the other developer on the west side of Cross Creek Parkway about expanding the townhome development. The longest holdup in most of this that required patience and diligence on the part of city staff and the developer, was trying to get the driveway permitting through NCDOT; it took several years. She stated they look forward to the successful development of that property.

Finance Director's Report

Finance Director Johnson reported for the month of December 2025, General Fund year-to-date receipts totaled \$11,810,588.30 and year-to-date expenditures totaled \$9,552,341.00. As a result, year-to-date revenues exceeded expenditures by \$2,258,247.30.

She stated the City is in good financial standing for December 2025. The month of December is a higher expenditure month for the city due to the payment of Christmas and Longevity bonuses which employees thank City Council for continuing to fund these payments.

Councilman Bell stated he noticed the ad valorem tax collection was behind what it was last year. He asked Finance Director Johnson if she could explain what that was attributed to. She replied taxes are collected by Halifax County. They typically collect 98-99%; the City collects what the County sends us.

City Manager Traynham added that is for prior year taxes not current year, so it depends on how quickly they catch up on taxes owed from the past.

Other Business/Closed Session

Motion was made by Councilman Bell, seconded by Councilman Jackson, and unanimously carried to go into Closed Session to discuss a personnel matter as allowed by NCGS 143-318.11 (a)(6).

City Council took a brief recess before going into closed session.

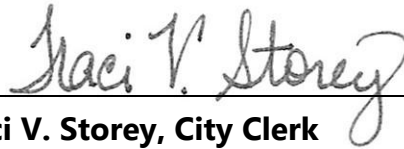
Minute Book Pages 22207 - 22220 contain Minutes and General Account of a Closed Session which have been sealed until such time as public inspection of those minutes would not frustrate the purpose of the Closed Session.

Adjournment

City Council returned to Open Session.

Motion was made by Councilman Jackson, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant and unanimously carried to adjust City Manager Traynham's salary 3% retroactive to January 1, 2026.

There being no further business, motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Councilman Bell, and unanimously carried to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.



Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Approved by Council Action on: February 3, 2026