



Minutes of the Roanoke Rapids City Council

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on **Tuesday, February 3, 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
Larry Chalker, Public Works Director
Lawrence Wiggins, Police Chief

Absent: Christina Caudle, Human Resources Director
Ashley Thomas, Main Street Director
Kristyn Anderson, Planning & Development Director
Kelly Daughtry, Parks & Recreation Director
Richard Cook, Fire Chief

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 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 as presented.

There being no conflicts, motion was made by Councilman Bell, seconded by Councilman Stainback, and unanimously carried to adopt the agenda as presented.

Approval of City Council Minutes

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant, seconded by Councilman Jackson, and unanimously carried to approve the January 20, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting minutes as drafted.

Committee Appointments

Roanoke Canal Commission

City Clerk Storey stated Julia Ann Fitts' term on the Roanoke Canal Commission has expired. Mrs. Fitts is willing to serve another term, but she has served the maximum number of two consecutive terms. City Council has the authority to waive this policy and has done so in the past. A ballot vote was taken earlier, and Mrs. Fitts received a unanimous vote.

Motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant, and unanimously carried to waive the City policy and reappoint Julia Ann Fitts to the Roanoke Canal Commission.

Senior Center Advisory Committee

Mr. Gary Arnett has submitted a volunteer application for the Senior Center Advisory Committee which is enclosed in your packets. Mr. Arnett is eligible and there is currently a vacancy on the committee with a term that expires in August 2028. A ballot vote was taken earlier, and Mr. Arnett received a unanimous vote.

Motion was made by Councilman Strickland, seconded by Councilman Jackson, and unanimously carried to appoint Gary Arnett to the Senior Center Advisory Committee.

Library Advisory Committee

Mr. Robert Creekmore-Phillips has submitted a volunteer application for the Library Advisory Committee which is enclosed in your packets. Mr. Phillips is eligible and there is currently a vacancy on the committee with a term that expires in May 2028. A ballot vote was taken earlier, and Mr. Phillips received a unanimous vote.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant, seconded by Councilman Bell, and unanimously carried to appoint Robert Creekmore-Phillips to the Library Advisory Committee.

New Business

Presentation of Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Audit Report

Mr. Gregory Redman, CPA said the Financial Statements and Independent Auditors Report for Year Ended June 30, 2025, was submitted on time and approved by the Local Government Commission last week. He presented and summarized the report highlighting the following: (Report On file in Clerk's Office)

- Independent Auditor's Report
 - Summarizes his responsibilities, City's responsibilities and results of audit.
 - Unmodified Opinion – Based on audit, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance to General Accepted Accounting Principles. There no material departures from GAAP and no material findings to be reported.
- General Fund Balance Sheet
 - Cash in Bank as of June 30, 2025, was \$13,686,738 (Unrestricted).
 - Restricted Cash as of June 30, 2025 was \$394,992.
 - Unassigned Fund Balance was \$12,233,506. LGC looks at that as a percentage of the City's annual expenditures. The City's annual expenditures were just over \$19M. The City has a 63% unassigned fund balance which is about the statewide average for cities this size. Minimum requirement is 32%.
- Revenues and Expenditures
 - General Fund Total Revenues - \$20.4M
 - General Fund Total Expenditures - \$19.1M
 - Revenue over expenditures - \$1.3M (net income). The General Fund is supposed to support itself so anytime you have a surplus that's a good thing.
- Budget and Actual
 - Revenues and Expenditure compared with the budget. He noted there were no negative numbers which means the finance department kept expenses in line with the budget and budget amendments were approved by City Council.
- Debt
 - Direct borrowings (Loans on various equipment) - Beginning Balance \$742,00 with a balance of \$588,000 at the end of the year.
 - Tax increment special revenue bonds – Started at \$6.8M; end of the year a little over \$6M.
 - Lease Liabilities (New item to report as of last year) - \$1.9M

- Total Pension (LEO) – Ending balance \$1.6M and Net Pension (LGERS) - Ending balance \$5.3M. These monies are already set aside with the State; the City sends these payments monthly for retirement of employees.
- Total OPEB liability (Projection of healthcare for retirees) – Ending balance is \$6.3M.
- Special Project – CDBG \$74,457
- Tax Levy
 - Total Levy - \$9.78M
 - Total Property Tax Collection - \$9.72M
 - The City had a 99.32% property tax collection rate. Very good percentage.

Mr. Redman stated that was the financial part of the audit. They looked at the City's checks, invoices, bank reconciliations and made sure the City was complying with all the general state statutes.

He said because the City receives grant funds such as Powell Bill along with others, they are required to perform a compliance audit. Again, this letter is an unmodified opinion. There are no findings and the City complied with the grants as required. Because the City received over \$500,000 in state funds, they are required to perform a state single audit. It is also an unmodified opinion.

- Schedule of Expenditures of Federal and State Funds
 - Federal - \$208,350 – US Dept. Health & Human Services, CDBG, NC US Dept. of Justice
 - State - \$669,550 – Powell Bill, State Directed Grant, Aid to Public Libraries Grant & Senior Center General Purpose Grant

Mr. Redman stated overall there was an increase in the fund balance and net profit in the general fund. There is 63% available fund balance to be spent which is better than it has been while it is the statewide average for cities this size. He said they did not have any recommended changes to internal control. There was a software change during the year, which is always a challenge for everyone, but he thinks everything worked out well.

Mayor Doughtie asked if the Special Revenue Bonds were the theatre debt. Mr. Redman replied yes, they started out at \$19M and it is now down to \$6M.

Mayor Doughtie said he thought the City received over \$900,000 in CDBG grant funds. Mr. Redman replied these figures are the money spent. City Manager Traynham added they did spend and close out the 2019 CDBG grant program. They had just gotten started with the new CDBG grant in that fiscal year. The City submits for reimbursement; they do not send all the money at once. A majority of that is in the environmental review stage.

Councilman Bell asked how often do they submit for reimbursement. City Manager replied generally quarterly, but it depends on the activity of the grant.

Mayor Doughtie asked if the 32% requirement for fund balance been raised in recent years. Mr. Redman said for a long time it was 8%, then they wanted a minimum of 25%, but now they recommend 32%. That is basically four months of operations.

Motion was made by Councilman Bell, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant and unanimously carried to accept the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 audit report as presented tonight.

Councilman Bell stated a job well done to the workers in finance and the City Manager.

Consideration of Ordinance No. 2026.06 (Storm Response and Recovery)

Public Works Director Chalker said on May 16, 2025, the City experienced a powerful storm causing significant damage. The City did not have specific budget funds for a storm event of its size. A budget amendment in the amount of \$250,000 was requested and approved by City Council on May 20, 2025, for the debris collection and removal. The City has completed processing the storm debris and requests additional funding to finish paying the vendor what is owed which is more than the \$250,000. He said plus there is still a little more hauling left. He said there was a quote included in their packet from MJ Price for \$23,750 for hauling away the debris that is left in the limb yard. He presented the following budget ordinance:

**Ordinance No. 2026.06
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

Fund Balance – Storm Response & Recovery -5-16-25

Project Revenues – Storm Response & Recovery -5-16-25 **\$71,828.00**

FUND PROJECT TOTAL **\$71,828.00**

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

Funding to General Fund – Storm Response & Recovery -5-16-25
Project Expenditures – Storm Response & Recovery -5-16-25 **\$71,828.00**

FUND PROJECT TOTAL **\$71,828.00**

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Mayor Doughtie asked for clarification on the \$71,828. Public Works Chalker said the City has not received any funds from the state. They are still processing the City's request. There was a tremendous delay in the beginning. City Manager Traynham requested emergency management public assistance on June 12, 2025. She requested an update on July 14, 2025. She received response that the documentation was circulating around state government. On September 25, 2025, he emailed Buddy Wrenn to ask for help in getting an update from the state emergency management on where their funding was. He immediately received a response from a lady in emergency management that the City's declaration package had been submitted to the Governor's office. Somewhere along the way somebody apparently got confused because the City kept asking questions and he received a reply that the state would have to recirculate the request again. He believes it is due to the tremendous damage done in the mountains by the hurricane because when he first called them, that is where they were. That could have contributed to some of the delays. Once staff found out they did not have any funds coming in, they started paying the vendor out of the \$250,000 that City Council approved. The amount of this budget amendment is the balance of what they owe the vendor, they have been very gracious, and the estimate of what they have left to haul off.

Attorney Davis asked for Public Works Chalker to explain to City Council and the public that the City cannot leave this debris just sitting around forever. They have to get rid of it because the collection site is only certified for a certain amount. Public Work Director Chalker explained the City has its normal limb yard where the knuckle boom is out every day, picking up limbs, trimmings, etc. from alleys and yards and

taken to this state permitted yard. For normal collections, the City is allowed certain amounts on hand at any given time. On a revolving basis, they get it in, grind it up and haul it away. It can't get over a certain amount of cubic yardage. When they have a storm such as this, a hurricane or an ice storm where limbs come down, then they permit a portion of that yard for emergency debris response. So, there is a limit for that emergency debris, but they still have to do something with it because it is so much of it. The City collected 12,090 cubic yards of debris from a seven-minute windstorm. He took a guess at \$250,000 never thinking they would spend that. They worked on this storm for over a month. They can see all the invoices in the packet. They had to call a vendor in to help because they could not handle it by themselves.

City Manager Traynham added the longer the debris sits, the more it has to be monitored, turned and temperature regulated so it doesn't spontaneously combust. This is why a healthy fund balance is necessary. They are looking at almost \$322,000 in expenses from just that one storm event. They could imagine if they had a few of those types of events at one time why it is important to keep those reserves. They never know if they are going to get reimbursed or not and the timing of those reimbursements are not as quick as they used to be.

Councilman Bell said he has been to the limb yard site where they store the debris. If they have never been out there, they need to go because then they will realize what Public Works Director Chalker is saying. Once they get to a certain point, they cannot put anymore out there. They must have somewhere to send it.

Motion was made by Councilman Bell, seconded by Councilman Strickland, and unanimously carried to adopt Ordinance No. 2026.06 in the amount of \$71,828.00 to complete the storm response and recovery from the May 16, 2025, storm.

Consideration of Ordinance No. 2026.07 (SHIIP Grant)

Finance Director Johnson said the Senior Center received SHIIP Grant funds in the amount of \$3,799.00. She presented the following budget ordinance:

**Ordinance No. 2026.07
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	\$3,799.00
FUND PROJECT TOTAL	<u>\$3,799.00</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	\$3,799.00
FUND PROJECT TOTAL	<u>\$3,799.00</u>

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Motion was made by Councilman Jackson, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant, and unanimously carried to adopt Ordinance No. 2026.07 in the amount of \$3,799.00 for SHIIP Grant funds awarded to the Senior Center.

City Manager’s Report

City Manager Traynham reported the following updates from administration:

Main Street

- *Director Ashley Thomas is addressing district conditions through a comprehensive inventory of approximately 156 individual structures across the uptown and downtown district. This inventory documents building conditions, signage, vacancies and use. With the inventory substantially complete, the program is moving into targeted next steps, including coordination related to zoning, code enforcement, and improvements to how City-controlled public spaces are maintained and used. A detailed report outlining inventory findings, priorities, and next steps will be presented at the next Council meeting or as soon thereafter as possible. There are a number of properties currently listed for sale or lease along Roanoke Avenue, which are publicly listed at mainstreetroanokerapids.com/properties. Property owners who would like their building included are encouraged to contact the Main Street Director. The next Main Street Committee meeting will be held on Monday, February 9, 2026, in the main conference room at City Hall.*

Police Department

- **Community Crime Stats Meetings.** *Community outreach initiatives are underway to include monthly meetings to be held at advertised locations throughout the city to provide crime statistics and offer citizens the opportunity to engage with RRPD leadership. The first community crime stats meeting will be held on Monday, February 23, from 6:30 – 7:30 PM at the RRPD Substation Community Room within the New Town Neighborhood Resource Center. During the 2025 Calendar*

Year, the Police Department participated in 84 events, dedicating over 1,000 event service hours. These meetings will provide the opportunity for citizens to meet and engage with the leadership of the Police Department.

- The next offering of **Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET)** will begin at Nash Community College on February 23. Please contact Captain Gorton Williams for more info!

Parks & Recreation

- **Emry Skate Park** – Dominion Energy will complete the lighting installation by removing old poles, set new poles, and attach light fixtures. Parks & Rec Staff will meet with Brightspeed (\$15k grantor and sponsor) next week to discuss plans for a public grand opening. Staff will oversee installation of fencing and facility signage.
- **Senior Center** – on February 10th at 10:30 AM, the Halifax Co. Health Dept. will conduct Health Education programming. Join them on February 11th for a Valentine's Social and on February 17th for Health Screenings and a Dementia class.
- **TJ Davis Recreation Center** – Youth basketball season ended last week. Staff are collecting information from the adult industrial league teams, games to start mid-February. On February 26, the Parks & Rec Staff will host a basketball tournament with a local Adult Day Group. Spring program registrations are currently being accepted via RecDesk for youth Baseball and Soccer, and softball will be available soon!
- **Library** – A Kindness Card Craft program will be held on February 10 from 4-5 PM

Planning Department

- **Building & Inspections** – Plans are underway for Tractor Supply to complete a building renovation and install stations for pet washing; A commercial tenant space inside of Walmart will be upfit for a Dunkin Donuts.

Other

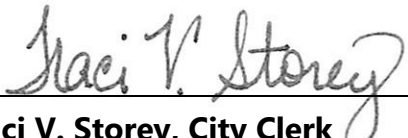
- The **NCDOT Environmental Analysis Unit** is currently reviewing a **Statewide Smart Signals** project in Halifax County, and specifically within the Roanoke Rapids System there are approximately 22 existing signals to be served. The project includes installing new junction boxes and directionally drilled fiber to connect existing traffic signals. No changes will be made to existing signal cabinets, foundations, equipment, or poles. All work will occur within the NCDOT right-of-way beneath existing roadways.
- The City received correspondence from NCDOT regarding our submission to the **Pedestrian Safety Call for Projects**. Based on initial review, funding availability, and the June 2026 obligation timeline, the project at **Roanoke Avenue/NC Highway 48 and W/E 5th Street** was approved to **move forward for consideration under TAP funding**, following a pedestrian fatality at this intersection on October 16, 2025. Advancing projects will next enter preliminary engineering and design; this notification does not represent a final funding commitment. Local governments are eligible applicants for Transportation Alternative Set-Aside Program Funds (TAP) as set forth in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).
- The **2026 Census Bureau Boundary and Annexation Survey (BAS)** is due February 20, 2026 – no changes to report.

- A meeting with the **NCDOT Rail Division** is scheduled for February 23, 2026, to discuss a feasibility study for the Weldon passenger rail project.
- The City submitted the **2025 CDBG-NR Annual Performance Report (APR)** to the North Carolina Department of Commerce.
- **Inclement Winter Weather** – the National Weather Service (NWS) has kept us informed of the latest weather briefings forecasted for our community. Please extend our sincere appreciation to our dedicated staff for their tireless efforts to mitigate hazards before, during, and after these back-to-back weekend events. Stay tuned for updates concerning the threat of inclement weather potential Wednesday night through Thursday morning.

Mayor Doughtie asked if she had any information from the group that is conducting the street analysis/survey. City Manager Traynham replied she did not have an update tonight but would get one to them.

Adjournment

There being no further business, motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Councilman Bell, and unanimously carried to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.


Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Approved by Council Action on: February 17, 2026