



Municipal Building

**Minutes of the Burlington
City Council Work Session**
425 S. Lexington Avenue, Burlington, NC
5:00pm - Monday, July 17, 2023

Mayor Jim Butler presided.

Council Members Present:

Mayor Jim Butler

Mayor Pro Tem Harold Owen

Council Member Robert Ward

Council Member Kathy Hykes

Council Member Ronnie Wall

Council Members Absent: None

Staff Present:

City Manager, Craig Honeycutt

City Attorney, David Huffman

City Clerk, Beverly Smith

Scott Bibler, Nolan Kirkman, Todd Lambert, Morgan Lasater, Matt Lawrence, Tony Laws, Jamie Lawson, Erin Nettles, Danny Nickel, Bob Patterson, Peggy Reece, Paige Shepard, Gary Smith, Kevin Turner, and John Vernon.

Media: Alamance News, Tomas Murawski

Mayor Butler called the meeting to order at 5:00pm

A) Burlington Downtown Corporation Proposal of Downtown Social District

Downtown Manager, Erin Nettles presented a proposal for a social district in the downtown Burlington area as a tool for economic development to help restaurants and small businesses increase foot traffic and enhance downtown events. She defined a social district as an area in which a person 21 years or older may responsibly consume alcoholic beverages, indoor or outdoor, sold by an ABC Permittee located within the designated social district. She provided an overview of NC House Bill 890 adopted in October 2021 with a provision allowing local governments to create social districts in North Carolina by creating a city ordinance and NC House Bill 211 adopted in July 2022 providing clarity to the original bill by outlining detail on the inter-workings of social districts. She reported over 50 cities in NC are currently participating in social districts, requirements for participation, how businesses opt in or out of the district, appropriate decals for cups concept, and rules and regulations for developing a social district area in your community. She highlighted social district strengths, considerations including police foot patrol, additional recycling and trash services, outreach proposal, proposed map of social district location/hours, as well as means of data tracking. She shared next steps including drafting of social district ordinance with Legal approval, adoption of an ordinance, filing with ABC, creation of materials needed for branding, and hosting of educational meetings for business and the community ending with a kick-off event for the proposed social district. She reported the BDC board recommends approval and asked City

Council to consider a social district and associated Ordinance adoption by August in order to implement the social district in time for the Phoenix 4th Friday Event in September.

Mayor Pro Tem Owen inquired about the timeline for legal preparations to adopt an Ordinance.

City Attorney Huffman responded that preparations could be made to meet the August timeline.

Following discussion, Council consensus was for Legal Department to work with Burlington Downtown Corporation on the preparation of a proposed Ordinance for Council consideration at the August 15, 2023, City Council meeting.

B) Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

Emergency Management Coordinator, Kevin Turner provided an overview of the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) which defines how the City will train, plan, respond to, and recover from a large-scale incident or disaster. The proposed EOP may also be used for large-scale planned events. Large-scale incidents or planned events have the potential to impact any department beyond its normal operating procedures, or the ability to impact the operations of multiple city departments at once. The EOP gives the City a framework to coordinate city resources as well as external resources if needed, to respond to and recover from an incident and quickly restore city services. The Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) will replace the current Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) written/updated in 2019. The new EOP is better aligned with City of Burlington operations and industry standards for Emergency Management Programs. The EOP has been reviewed by the City Manager and Department Heads to ensure their department's ability to support the plan as written and is recommended for adoption. He asked City Council to consider adoption at the July 18, 2023, City Council meeting.

Following the presentation, City Council consensus was to place an addition to the July 18, 2023, City Council Meeting consent agenda to consider adoption of the proposed Emergency Operations Plan.

C) Burlington Fire Department Firefighter/EMT Apprenticeship Program

Deputy Fire Chief, Matt Lawrence presented on an opportunity to enter a relationship with Alamance Community College, with supporting funding through Apprenticeship NC, to hire and train firefighter/EMT's through the Fire and EMS workforce development programs at Alamance Community College. He explained historically, the Burlington Fire Department has required that applicants have their Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certification at the time of application. Certification as NC Firefighter had been provided upon hiring through the city's 15-week recruit training. In some instances, there has been success at recruiting applicants with both Firefighter and EMT certifications, which has allowed transitioning into work much faster. However recently, the demand for certified FF/EMT's and the competitive job market has made it difficult to recruit applicants with either certification. Retention of employees in this job market is also challenging and has created a scenario where attrition has outpaced our ability to recruit and train Firefighter/EMT's, leaving us with substantial gaps and staffing vacancies. BFD has conducted a recent non-certified recruitment which yielded over 70 applications, indicating significant interest by job seekers to enter the Fire/EMS profession. He explained the goal of this apprenticeship program and relationship with ACC to create a direct pipeline for employees without experience or certification to enter the Fire/EMS workforce. Within this program, as employees of the City, participants would obtain training and certifications of NC Firefighter and NC EMT, then transition into the workforce to obtain continued on the job training, satisfying the program requirements and providing the Fire Department with needed staffing. He asked City Council to authorize the department to enter into the Apprenticeship NC agreement with Alamance Community College and approve five (5)

Fire/EMT Trainee positions to be dedicated to this program to provide a consistent and sustainable stream of certified apprentices into the department.

City Manager Honeycutt explained the vacancy rate at Burlington Fire Department. This program should address the concerns with mandatory overtime requirements on current staff and meets the demands of the current rate of vacancies the fire department experiences annually.

Mayor Butler inquired about the two training positions currently serving in the department and plans for those positions with the implementation of this proposed program.

Chief Lawrence addressed the need for ongoing monitoring in training, and will explore potential opportunities for reorganization as this program is implemented.

Council Member Ward inquired if the employee has any contractual terms to remain employed with the City of Burlington if hired through this program.

Chief Lawrence confirmed there are no service terms required which is effectively the same for the current training of fire service personnel.

Council Member Hykes inquired about the City's involvement in the hiring process for these positions.

Chief Lawrence confirmed the City is thoroughly involved with reviewing applicants and the hiring process is the same as any other personnel hired at the Burlington Fire Department.

Following discussion, Council consensus was to place an addition to the July 18, 2023, City Council Meeting consent agenda authorizing the City Manager to approve an agreement between the City of Burlington and Alamance Community College, the (5) proposed positions, and associated budget amendment.

D) Annexation Requests

0 Elrado Street (PID 139850), 619 Spence Street (PID 125911), 623 Spence Street (PID125904)

Planning Director Jamie Lawson reported on the following utility requests:

- A utility request that's been initiated by the property owner at 0 Elrado Street for a water and sewer connection. The parcel, which is approximately 5.11 acres in size, is located at the southern end of Elrado Street and consists of Alamance County tax identification number 139850.
- A utility request has been initiated by the property owner at 619 Spence Street for a water and sewer connection. The parcel, which is approximately .78 acres in size, is located on the east side of Spence Street, and consists of Alamance County tax identification number 125911.
- A utility request has been initiated by the property owner at 623 Spence Street for a water and sewer connection. The parcel, which is approximately .49 acres in size, is located on the east side of Spence Street, and consists of Alamance County tax identification number 125904.

Ms. Lawson reported staff recommends adoption of an Annexation Ordinance for each property and proposed a public hearing be set for August 15, 2023, for consideration.

Council member Hykes inquired about the preexisting single-family homes on the lots.

Ms. Lawson indicated she was not aware of pre-existing homes but will check on this and report back to Council.

Following the presentation and discussion, City Council consensus was to place additions to the July 18, 2023, City Council Meeting to adopt a Resolution setting a date of public hearing for the August 15, 2023, City Council meeting for consideration of adoption of Annexation Ordinances of all three properties as recommended by City staff.

E) Advisory Boards and Commission Appointments

Public Information Specialist John Vernon briefed Council on the current vacancies, applications received, and opened the discussion for Council to determine a slate for consideration to ensure the seats have active members in service.

City Council discussed the Library vacancy and asked that Mr. Vernon provide a report on the current demographics of the Library Board as they review the applications, to assist in the decision making process.

City Council discussed the CPAT appointments, areas of need in the current Charter, challenges with having a quorum, and asked staff to address the current Charter requirements, ways to make the board more engaging, and return to City Council with a revised Charter to address filling the vacancies on that board.

City Council discussed a slate of appointment and had consensus to formally approve a slate of applicants on the consent agenda for the majority of the board vacancies. They plan to discuss the Library and CPAT appointments once additional information has been vetted through Legal Department and advisory staff assigned to these boards.

F) City Manager Report

There were no items reported.

G) Request for Closed Session (6:35pm)

City Attorney David Huffman requested City Council enter a closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S. §143-318-11(a)(3) to consider and give instructions concerning the handling and settlement of claims and litigation including;

- Brandy Dixon v. City of Burlington Department of Police & Captain Mark Rascoe; Alamance County Superior Court 22 CVS 788
- Andrews Properties of the Triad, LLC v. City of Burlington and City of Burlington Board of Adjustments; Alamance County Superior Court 22 CVS 663
- Andrews Properties of the Carolinas v. City of Burlington and City of Burlington Board of Adjustments; Alamance County Superior Court 22 CVS 1365 re: 504 W. Webb Avenue

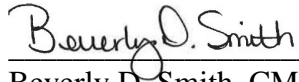
Council Member Ward made a motion seconded by Council member Wall enter closed session as requested. The motion carried unanimously.

Return to Open Session (7:45pm)

Council Member Ward made a motion seconded by Council Member Hykes to return to open session. The motion carried unanimously.

H) Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:46pm.



Beverly D. Smith
Beverly D. Smith, CMC, NCCMC, City Clerk

July 17, 2023, Work Session