

**FAYETTEVILLE CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MINUTES
COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL
APRIL 7, 2025
2:00 P.M.**

Present: Mayor Mitch Colvin

Council Members Katherine K. Jensen (District 1); Malik Davis (District 2); Mario Benavente (District 3) (arrived at 2:29 p.m.); Lynne Greene (District 5); Derrick Thompson (District 6); Brenda McNair (District 7) (via TEAMS); Courtney Banks-McLaughlin (District 8); Deno Hondros (District 9)

Absent: Council Member D. J. Haire (District 4)

Others Present: Douglas Hewett, City Manager
Lachelle Pulliam, City Attorney
Kelly Olivera, Assistant City Manager
Adam Lindsay, Assistant City Manager
Jeff Yates, Assistant City Manager
Jodi Phelps, Assistant City Manager
Kevin Dove, Fire Chief
Todd Joyce, Interim Police Chief
Christopher Cauley, Economic & Community Development Director
Albert Baker, Economic & Community Development Assistant Director
Sheila Thomas-Ambat, Public Services Director
Byron Reeves, Deputy Public Services Director
Alicia Lanier, Stormwater Projects Manager
Tyffany Neal, Transit Director
Jeffery Morin, Housing Program Manager
Loren Bymer, Marketing & Communications Director
Tiffany Murray, Chief Financial Officer
Kimberly Toon, Purchasing Manager
Brook Redding, Special Projects Manager
Molly Brown, Project Manager with Woolpert
Samantha Illes, Project Manager with Kimly-Horn
Jennifer Ayre, City Clerk
Members of the Press

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Colvin called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2.0 INVOCATION

The invocation was offered by Council Member Davis.

3.0 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Mayor and City Council.

4.0 CITY MANAGER REPORT

No report provided.

5.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Council Member Greene moved to approve the agenda.

SECOND: Council Member Davis__

VOTE: UNANIMOUS (9-0)

CLOSED SESSION

MOTION: Council Member Jensen moved to go into a closed session for economic development.
SECOND: Council Member Davis
VOTE: UNANIMOUS (9-0)

The regular session was recessed at 2:09 p.m. The regular session reconvened at 2:38 p.m.

MOTION: Council Member Benavente moved to go into open session.
SECOND: Council Member Davis
VOTE: UNANIMOUS (9-0)

6.0 OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

6.01 Presentation on College Lake Dam and Proposed Solutions for Carvers Creek Watershed

Ms. Alicia Lanier, Stormwater Projects Manager, presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint Presentation, and introduced Ms. Samantha Illes, Project Manager with Kimley-Horn. Ms. Lanier stated, the City is studying 25 percent of the local watersheds and primarily focuses on impacts to public right of way, evaluating impacts to emergency facilities, disconnected structures and single access neighborhoods, and structures that are more than 400 square feet.

Ms. Illes presented an update on the existing conditions of the College Lake Dam, which is in disrepair and does not meet State standards and is considered high risk by the state. The dam has been city-owned since 2002. There are three options to address the dam: take no action, which is not feasible, create a proposed and redesigned dam that meets State standards, or fully breach the dam, which would require significant downstream mitigation. The proposal is not to have College Lake hold water regularly, but to hold water to safely pass during storm events.

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of City Council was to approve the redesign and pursue funding, and add to the Capital Improvement Plan for College Lake Dam.

Ms. Illes presented proposed solutions for Carvers Creek watershed. In total, 772 disconnected structures would require 18 proposed solutions at the cost of \$54 million to solve all of the disconnected structures. Proposed top solutions for the Carvers Creek watershed are Summerchase Drive with 210 disconnected structures at a cost \$2.4 million to upsize culverts and pipe upgrades. Shawcroft Road and Garden Court will require floodplain benching at an estimated cost of \$2.4 million. Ramsey Street will require upsized culverts and added floodplain benching at an estimated cost of \$4.7 million and will require working together with the North Carolina Department of Transportation. Secondary proposed solutions were presented for Shawcroft Road and Deerpath Drive.

Consensus of City Council was to approve the 18 solutions for Carvers Creek watershed and enable staff to program them to the annual Capital Improvement Plan prioritization process while pursuing grants as applicable.

6.02 Stormwater Impervious Area Analysis & Tiered Rate Study

Mr. Byron Reeves, Stormwater Manager, and Ms. Molly Brown, Project Manager with Woolpert presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Reeves stated during the FY24 budget cycle Council charged staff with completing an impervious area analysis to look at supporting a tiered rate structure for the stormwater utility fee. Currently, Fayetteville is the only Phase 1 community that does not have a tiered rate structure for stormwater impervious structures.

Ms. Brown stated, the project had three phases: identify aerial imagery, complete the impervious area analysis based on imagery, and complete a stormwater utility rate structure evaluation. The goals for the tiered residential rate structure recommendations were to ensure it was fair and equitable, simple to understand, easily applied, similar to other Phase 1 communities, and generate sufficient revenue to support the program goals. Four municipalities were used as benchmarks: Durham, Greensboro, Raleigh, Winston-Salem, and Columbia, South Carolina. A random sample of 2,000 single-family residential parcels was used to check the size of the Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU), which is the Average Residential Impervious Area. One ERU for Fayetteville equals 2,266 square feet of building footprint. All commercial properties were also evaluated and had about a 60 percent increase in impervious area compared to what is currently in the Cumberland County billing database. Updated commercial impervious area in the database will generate an additional estimated \$1 million in revenue per year at the current \$7.00 per month. 92 percent of the accounts are residential, and only 8 percent are commercial, however, the commercial accounts are generating 60 percent of the revenues, which is in line with the amount of impervious area they are generating at 63 percent.

Discussion ensued.

A level of service assessment was also completed for the four major focuses that Stormwater supports: Capital Projects, Administrative Support, System Maintenance, and Regulatory Compliance.

Three options for the creation of the Tier Structure were provided.

Option 1 - Staff Recommended (Additional Revenue Generated \$1.03 Million)				
Tier	Percentage of Parcels	Impervious Area Square Feet	Monthly Rate	Annual Rate
Tier 1	67%	Less than 2,266	\$7.00	\$84.00
Tier 2	27%	2,267-3,399	\$10.50	\$126.00
Tier 3	6%	More than 3,400	\$14.00	\$168.00

Option 2 (Additional Revenue Generated \$491,600.00)				
Tier	Percentage of Parcels	Impervious Area Square Feet	Monthly Rate	Annual Rate
Tier 1	26%	Less than 1,600	\$5.25	\$63.00
Tier 2	42%	1,601-2,300	\$7.00	\$84.00
Tier 3	31%	More than 2,300	\$10.50	\$126.00

Option 3 (Additional Revenue Generated \$1.28 Million)				
Tier	Percentage of Parcels	Impervious Area Square Feet	Monthly Rate	Annual Rate
Tier 1	77%	Less than 2,500	\$7.00	\$84.00
Tier 2	22%	2,501-4,800	\$14.00	\$168.00
Tier 3	1%	More than 4,800	\$11.00	\$252.00

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of City Council was to approve the change to a tier structure and update the impervious area Cumberland County Billing Database, and move this item to the May 15, 2025, Budget Work Session to determine the best tier structure, include an education component on fee credit, and debt scenario projections.

6.03 Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Funding Opportunity for Structure Elevation or Buyout of Damaged Properties

Mr. Byron Reeves, Stormwater Manager, presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated staff is requesting consensus to pursue a Hazard Mitigation Grant (HMGP) funding to mitigate losses to repetitive loss structures. The HMGP is a FEMA-funded program designed to reduce or eliminate future damage and loss following a disaster. HMGP is federally funded but managed by the North Carolina Department of Public Safety's Division of Emergency Management.

Two Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) are currently open. One NOFA for Tropical Storm Helene. Fayetteville could request secondary funding due to primary being the declared counties affected by Hurricane Helene. The second NOFA for Potential Tropical Cyclone 8. Fayetteville could request secondary funding due to primary being the declared counties affected by Tropical Cyclone 8.

Mitigation projects that are eligible for this grant include the acquisition or elevation of residential and non-residential properties that experience flood damage. Acquisition can be defined as the purchase or buyout of a flood-prone home using FEMA and State funds from a willing homeowner. The homeowner is offered pre-disaster market value for their structure, if qualified, as determined by a certified appraiser. Once the home and property are acquired, the home is demolished, and the land is deeded to the local government with an open space restriction into perpetuity to restore or conserve natural floodplain functions. Elevating a home is the physical raising (elevation and foundation replacement) of an existing structure to an elevation 2 feet higher than the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) or higher if required by FEMA or local ordinances. The project pays for engineering to determine if the home is feasible to raise, then elevates and rebuilds the foundation.

Currently, there are 44 repetitive loss structures in Fayetteville that staff believe could benefit from receiving mitigation assistance. To qualify as a repetitive loss structure, it must be an NFIP-insured structure that has had at least two paid flood losses of more than \$1,000.00 each in any 10-year period. The State would pay the local match for the program, not the City, it is an allocation, not a competitive grant, there is no cap on price of the home that can be acquired or elevated, and there is an unprecedented amount of funding of over \$1 billion. The City will be required to take on maintenance of the properties in perpetuity, as no inhabitable structures will be allowed on the acquired properties.

Consensus of City Council was to approve staff pursue the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding for repetitive loss structures in Fayetteville.

6.04 FAST Title VI Survey - Fare/Service Equity Analysis

Ms. Tyffany Neal, Transit Director, presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated this presentation is on the Title VI Survey for Fare and Service Equity Analysis. This survey was completed as a result of Transit's most recent triennial review, completed by the Federal Transit Administration. The purpose of the project was to assess the equity of the fare structure, fare media, lowest ridership fixed routes, and lowest ridership holiday schedules. Ms. Neal introduced Ms. Megan Metheny, Project Manager with RLS, and Ms. Jamie Walters, Transit Planner.

Ms. Metheny stated the survey received 577 responses over a two-week period that exceeded the target sample size by 37 percent. 56 percent of fixed route riders utilize FAST transit daily for work and purchase passes at the Transit Center, with the most common pass type being the one-day pass. 75 percent of FAST TRAC riders use the service weekly for work and purchase passes at the Transit Center, with the most common pass type being the 20-ride pass. Ms. Metheny also presented data on new fare media tolerance for reloadable cards or mobile apps and the FAST Fare Structure and pass types.

The fare policy recovery goals were to recover a minimum of 20 percent of transit operating costs with transit system-generated revenues by 2022, which includes passenger fares, leases, advertising, miscellaneous revenues, and third-party route subsidies. At the close of 2024, the operating recovery was 7.5 percent and 6.15 percent for fares, for a total of 13.65 percent. Council may want to consider a revision to better align with the existing conditions regarding its fare recovery or adjust fares to be in line with an obtainable policy. To address possible fare adjustments, the potential revenue impacts of increasing the most popular fare passes were provided.

Discussion ensued.

The FAST Transit Development Plan proposed a three-step process: Rebuild Service, which is 91 percent complete; Improve Service by reviewing lowest ridership routes, increase frequency, and adjust services levels on low ridership holidays; and Expand Service by becoming a regional service with Hope Mills and Spring Lake and expanded service to Fort Bragg and the airport.

Ms. Walters presented the five lowest-performing routes and the proposed modifications. Route 11 has the lowest ridership, and the proposed recommendation would remove service on Ramsey Street and Country Club Drive and bring back service to Seabrook Road and Langdon Road. The proposed Route 10 recommendation is to repurpose the Strickland Bridge Road from Fisher Road to Century Circle to provide service to the Bingham Road area. The proposed Route 17 recommendation is to increase the 90-minute frequency to 60 minutes by removing service from Morganton Road. The proposed Route 19 recommendation is to add service to Santa Fe Drive, Military Business Park, and the Amazon Fulfillment Center. Route 31 has no recommended changes.

Ms. Neal stated staff recommends a three-year phased approach to introduce new fare media such as reloadable farecards, kiosks, or apps, fare capping, discontinue cash on buses, modify the 5-day pass to a 7-day pass, and eliminate or reduce holiday service for Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, and Labor Day.

Consensus of City Council was to approve all recommendations except fare increase to verify if ridership will increase without the fare increase.

6.05 2025-2029 Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Consolidated Plan, 2025-2026 Annual Action Plan, and updated Citizen Participation Plan

Mr. Albert Baker, Assistant Economic & Community Development Director, presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Office has objectives for the development of viable communities that include community improvements, affordable housing, and economic opportunities. The City receives four HUD entitlement programs: Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA). A market analysis and needs assessment were conducted, and the top eight priority needs and top nine goals were provided.

Mr. Baker explained the HUD consolidated plan process and the ways residents were able to participate, such as community meetings, surveys, the required 30-day public comment period, and public hearings. The 5-year Consolidated Plan has five major components: needs assessment, housing market analysis, 5-year strategic plan, annual action plan, and citizen participation. In meetings with residents, they identified needs as affordable housing, support services, home repairs, cost of repairs, lack of affordable units, and rental costs. Anticipated funding allocations for CDGB, HOME, HOPWA, and ESG were presented and anticipated to total \$4,715,124.00.

The list of CDBG grant application awards was presented for twelve non-profit organizations for a total of \$263,000.00. Five organizations were recommended not to fund due to their matrix scores. Three non-profit organizations were recommended to receive ESG grant application awards for a total of \$143,721.00. Three organizations were recommended not to fund. Fayetteville Urban Ministries and Habitat for Humanity were recommended for partial funding of the CDBG Rehabilitation grants, which are not subject to the federal cap on the grants.

Discussion ensued on funded applications and classes, and training for organizations that do not initially receive funding.

There are three Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) applications that are recommended for conditional letters. Rosselle Commons, Hidden Grove, and Aspen Pointe. LIHTC is a competitive state process, and only one or two developments may be funded. Each project requested \$600,000.00.

Consensus of City Council was to accept the report.

6.06 Presentation on the Proposed Changes to the Homebuying HERO Program

Mr. Jeffery Morin, Housing Program Manager, presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated that there are three tiers to the Homebuying HERO program. The Citizen HERO is available for any resident first-time homebuyer, can receive up to \$20,000.00, and their gross income is at or below 120% of the area median income for their family size. The Public Service HERO is available for first-time homebuying employees of Cape Fear Valley Medical Center, Cumberland County Schools, Cumberland County Government, and City employees with less than one-year and no performance evaluation, can receive up to \$30,000.00, and their gross income is at or below 120% of the area median income for their family size. The City Employee HERO is available for first-time homebuying City employees with at least 1 year at the City and who have a "meets expectations" on their most recent evaluation, can receive up to \$20,000.00, and their gross income is at or below 140% of the area median income for their family size.

The Citizen HERO program has assisted eight individuals over the last three years. The Public Service HERO program has assisted three individuals over the last year. The City Employee HERO program has assisted six employees over the last three years.

The funding for the program is blended from federal, state, and local funds. The federal funds are replenished yearly at \$200,000.00 and have the most restrictions. To date, \$30,000.00 of federal funding has been spent. State funding was a one-time funding of \$1,000,000.00, and \$325,000.00 has been spent. Local funding was a one-time funding of \$450,000.00, and \$200,000.00 has been spent.

Mr. Morin stated the recommended changes to the policy include a 1-year service and performance standard requirement for Public Service HEROS, remove the \$30,000.00 guarantee and change it to up to \$30,000.00 for City Employee HEROS, and include city retirees and change funding from \$20,000.00 to \$30,000.00 for Public Service HEROS.

Mayor Colvin discussed his City Council Agenda Item Request to include Fayetteville State University, Methodist University, and Fayetteville Technical Community College in the Homebuying HERO Program.

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of City Council was to reject all staff recommendations and direct staff to bring back alternative recommendations to include other state and government agencies, and prior ownership requirements at the May Work Session. Council Members Benavente, McNair, Banks-McLaughlin, and Hondros were opposed to the consensus motion.

6.07 City Council Agenda Item Request - Proposed Expansion of Down Payment Assistance Program - Mayor Colvin

Mayor Colvin stated his request is to expand the homebuying hero program to include universities such as FSU, Methodist, and FTCC, remove the 1-year barrier, allow for newly married couples to purchase a joint home even if one of them has owned a home in the past, and if someone moves to Fayetteville for a position they have the ability to utilize the program.

6.08 City Council Agenda Item Request - Carnival Permit- Mayor Colvin

Mayor Colvin stated any events downtown are required to have a special events permit. However, there is currently no process for events that take place in parking lots around the City that identifies security plans or the number of expected attendees. Mayor Colvin requested staff identify possible registration processes for larger events throughout the City to ensure the City knows what events are happening.

Consensus of City Council was to move this item forward for staff research.

7.0 ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.