

**FAYETTEVILLE CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL
APRIL 8, 2026
10:00 A.M.**

Present: Mayor Mitch Colvin;

Council Members Stephon Ferguson (District 1); Malik Davis (District 2) (arrived at 10:51 a.m.); Antonio Jones (District 3); Lynne Greene (District 5); Derrick Thompson (District 6); Brenda McNair (District 7); Shaun McMillan (District 8); Deno Hondros (District 9)

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

Others Present: Douglas Hewett, City Manager
Lachelle Pulliam, City Attorney
Jodi Phelps, Assistant City Manager
Jeffery Yates, Assistant City Manager
Michael Gibson, Interim Assistant City Manager
Kevin Dove, Fire Chief
Roberto Bryan, Police Chief
Willie Henry, Chief Information Officer
Tiffany Murray, Chief Financial Officer
Kimberly Toon, Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Andrew LaGala, Airport Director
Sheila Thomas-Ambat, Public Services Director
Byron Reeves, Deputy Public Services Director
Jerry Clipp, Human Resources Director
Tyffany Neal, Transit Director
Gerald Newton, Development Services Director
John Jones, Office of Community Safety Director
Christopher Cauley, Economic & Community Development Director
Chris Lowery, Strategic Performance and Analytics Manager
Andrew Brayboy, Senior Corporate Performance Analyst
Christopher Williams, Management Analyst
Andrew Manzell, City Manager's Office Intern
David Scott, Communications Manager
Jennifer Ayre, City Clerk
Members of the Press

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Colvin called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2.0 INVOCATION

The invocation was offered by Council Member McNair.

3.0 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the City Council.

4.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Council Member Thompson moved to approve the agenda.

SECOND: Council Member Greene

VOTE: UNANIMOUS (8-0)

5.0 OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

5.01 Fountainworks - FY27 Fayetteville City Council Strategic Planning Retreat Debrief

Mr. Chris Lowery, Strategic Planning and Analytics Manager, stated this comes from the March 23, 2026, Council meeting to confirm everything was captured from the retreat and to re-clarify the priorities. If Council chooses to, today would be to approve the language of the priorities. Mr. Lowery introduced Ms. Julie Brenman, Senior Consultant with Fountainworks, and Ms. Laura Robinson, Learning and Development Manager.

Ms. Brenman provided an overview of the strategic planning retreat that took place beginning in January. The priorities are still being consolidated.

The four proposed priorities include:

- Continue implementing a comprehensive approach to community safety
- Enhance economic growth opportunities throughout the City
- Expand housing and neighborhood revitalization efforts, with emphasis on affordable housing needs
- Improve and expand transportation, transit, and overall connectivity for residents

City Council was in consensus to approve the language for Priority 1, Priority 2, and Priority 4.

The new recommended language for Priority 3: Expand housing and neighborhood revitalization and refurbishment efforts, with emphasis on older neighborhoods and affordable housing needs.

Discussion ensued regarding the language.

A consensus motion was taken for the Priority 3 updated recommended language “Expand housing and neighborhood revitalization and refurbishment efforts, with emphasis on mature and attainable housing needs”. The consensus motion failed with Council Members Ferguson, Jones, McNair, and McMillan in opposition to the consensus motion.

A consensus motion was taken for the Priority 3 new language excluding the word refurbishment. The consensus motion failed with Mayor Colvin, and Council Members, Greene, Thompson, and McNair in opposition to the consensus motion.

Ms. Brenman stated the next step is to take the priority language to the Senior Leadership Team Retreat next week. The Strategic Plan will then come back for final approval. Discussion ensued.

Mayor Pro Tem Thompson asked if goals were not achieved last year, what will be brought back differently by staff in order to achieve the goals. Ms. Brenman stated every year the City staff refreshes their workplans and many of them are long term. Dr. Douglas Hewett, City Manager, stated staff does not lose sight of projects that have not received funding and continue to work on them and broaden the approach. Discussion ensued regarding how the federal administration plans affect the goals.

City Council was in consensus to approve the updated language for Priority 3: Expand housing neighborhood revitalization and refurbishment efforts with an emphasis on mature neighborhoods and attainable housing needs.

5.02 Presentation of the Recommended FY2027-32 Capital Improvement Program

Mr. Jeffery Yates, Assistant City Manager, presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated by General Statute, the City Manager has to provide Council a recommended budget by the end of May. By bringing the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Technology Improvement Program (TIP) to City Council early, it will allow additional time for discussion. This is an introduction for informational purposes only and will be voted on with the budget in June. This is the collection of information from the departments, financial advisors, and market conditions, that helps determine different projects and strategies. The parking lot is for items that need to be researched or additional items that Council Members are interested in including. Once the budget is completed, the parking lot items will be reviewed for any that can be added within the capacity and then brought back for City Council’s review.

The CIP is balanced at the current tax rate with what can realistically be delivered and aligned with the current City priorities. Even with the newly drafted strategic priorities, the recommended CIP will fit into them and still be achievable. Through Fiscal Year (FY)2027 \$96.6 million in CIP Projects is recommended and through FY2032 the total program value of \$668.1 million. There are \$11.1 million in projects recommended for closure and \$1.15 million from completed projects that can be reallocated. Discussion ensued on how funds are reallocated from completed projects.

Mr. Yates provided an overview of staff’s core principles used to help prioritize and rank CIP projects. It includes a focus on finishing projects that have been started, ensure the projects can be delivered, understanding the capacity with a focus on financial, organizational and market capacities, take care of what we already have; such as buildings, roads, and other infrastructure, and plan for the long term. Discussion ensued.

The recommended CIP is balanced on the current two cent tax rate, closed project funding was reallocated, the stormwater rate implementation is underway, with possible increases based on operations, solid waste may also have a possible rate increase, the General Obligation (GO) Bond capacity has been exhausted, and staff continues to focus on grant funding. Possible funding strategies for the FY27 CIP include an additional 1-2 pennies for capital or election of a future general obligation bond. The proposed FY26 penny value is \$2,393,800.00. Discussion ensued regarding exhausting the GO Bonds and what the projects were. Discussion ensued regarding Limited Obligation Bond projects.

The unassigned fund balance is a combination of General Fund and unassigned closed project money, which will be reappropriated. For FY27 \$47,752,618.00 is recommended for infrastructure, \$42,524,094.00 is recommended for maintenance and renewal, \$1,998,504.00 is recommended for facilities renovations, and \$4,337,015.00 is recommended for expansion.

Recommended new projects for general capital projects includes a total of \$1,287,663.00 for a study for facility inventory and replacement, parking lot maintenance, and replacement of the timekeeping system. Public Safety recommended projects is a total of \$2,074,471.00 include an upgraded CAD System, emergency medical services portal, and upgrades to the public safety radio. Parks and Recreation recommended projects for a total of \$493,695.00 include track improvements and Senior Center East additional parking. Transportation recommended projects for a total of \$5,018,711.00 includes City-owned signal modernization, and pavement preservation program II. Stormwater recommended projects for a total of \$895,000.00, including drainage assistance, office capacity optimization, and stormwater strategic plan. Transit recommended projects for a total of \$5,810,000.00, including bus replacement, support vehicle replacements, refurbishment of buses, and radio replacements.

Discussion ensued regarding the timekeeping system replacement, what projects are included in maintenance and renewal, title financing, and how projects were added to the CIP.

Additional funds include the Transit special revenue funds for a total of \$100,000.00, the airport capital project funds for a total of \$13,203,253.00, and the solid waste fund for a total of \$378,828.00. Discussion ensued regarding the Airport Capital Project fund and what can be used for growth of the Airport.

A recommended projects list if an additional penny or additional two pennies were added was provided.

Risks to the CIP include geopolitical, political, economic, market, and organizational capacity. The Farmers Road neighborhood single access, Locks Creek neighborhood single access, and Langdon Street streetscape projects were added to the parking lot.

MOTION: Council Member Hondros moved to receive the report
SECOND: Council Member Davis
VOTE: UNANIMOUS (9-0)

Mayor Colvin recessed the meeting at 12:47 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 1:01 p.m.

5.03 Authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with the apparent lowest responsive, responsible bidder, Group III Management for the McArthur Road Sports Field Complex project in the total amount of \$13,663,000.

Mr. Jeffery Yates, Assistant City Manager, stated staff recently brought back the request to authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the apparent lowest responsive, responsible bidder for the McArthur Road Sports Field Complex. Mr. Dan LaMontagne, Senior Project Manager with Freese and Nichols, presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated the City used a single prime construction option which is allowable under North Carolina General Statute. The single prime method is awarded to the lowest, responsive, responsible bidder and the General Contractor contracts with various subcontractors that must be identified in the original bid. For single prime, the design is separate and completed before the bidding of the construction project begins. Council Member Hondros stated other projects that were stalled previously were done as single prime, but based on recent challenges, is it recommended to continue to use the single prime delivery method. Mr. LaMontagne stated the delay of projects was not due to the procurement method, but instead on the contractor.

The City conducted a competitive sealed bid process, and the lowest bidder was Eastern Builders, but they failed at being responsive because they were not licensed as a General

Contractor in North Carolina. Group III Management was the next bid reviewed and met all requirements for being the lowest, responsive, and responsible bidder. There was a mandatory pre-proposal meeting that all interested parties attended which laid out the scope of the project.

Mayor Colvin stated when it was originally presented at the March 23, 2026, Council Meeting, one of the questions asked was if Group III Management had done this type of project before and was completing that type of project before not considered a requirement. Mr. LaMontagne stated the qualification is the ability to complete large construction projects. Discussion ensued regarding requirements in the Request For Proposals (RFP) and the City's RFP process.

Mr. Dale Crawford, Crawford Design, stated he is the Project Manager for the project and explained the design process for the McArthur Sports Complex and stated it is a similar project to ones he has done previously and currently. Mr. Crawford stated he is the liaison between the contractor and the design intent. Mr. Gordon Rose, Senior Principal with Gradient, PLLC, stated the architect and engineer are the arbiter of complaints, issues, conflicts, or disagreements with the project. Discussion ensued regarding the list of subcontractors and how everyone works together, and the project is managed.

Mr. Michael Gibson, Interim Assistant City Manager, stated the project started in 2016 with an original budget was at \$9 million to be built on Fields Road, but the first estimate received was \$28 million. Over the years, the changes in the project design have lowered it to \$13 million for the construction of the fields and buildings. Dr. Douglas Hewett, City Manager, stated the location was never confirmed for any of the bond projects.

Council Member Hondros asked if we have approached the Tourism Development Authority (TDA). Mr. Gibson stated there have been several conversations with the TDA and some funding is available but need to ensure sustainability. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Oscar "Skip" Greene, with Group III Management, stated they have done projects on Fort Bragg to renovate the historic district, which added 1,000 geothermal wells and then added ball fields on top of the wells. Mr. Greene stated knowing that this is more ball fields than before, Group III Management has hired Mr. Bill Ellis, who will be onsite once a week. Group III Management has extensive experience in Fayetteville over the last thirty years.

Mr. Leonord Hughes with Turner & Townsend Heery is the Owners Advisor to the City and stated they will advise on the construction, meet with the construction team, designers, and project manager, as well as provide advice to the City when mitigating issues. Turner & Townsend Heery will also complete site visits, address any issues during those visits, review and advise on requested change orders, and the project timeline. Additionally, they will manage the reviewing and advising of payment requests and handle the final project closure. Turner & Townsend Heery is scheduled to report findings monthly but can meet as necessary.

MOTION: Council Member Ferguson moved to authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with the apparent lowest responsive, responsible bidder, Group III Management for the McArthur Road Sports Field Complex project in the total amount of \$13,663,000.

SECOND: Council Member Jones

VOTE: UNANIMOUS (9-0)

5.04 Expanding Water and Sewer Assessment Assistance Program- Phase V

Mr. Christopher Cauley, Economic and Community Development Director, stated the water and sewer assessment assistance program was established over 20 years ago and was created to assist eligible homeowners with the required cost of \$5,000.00 for water and sewer assessments, as well as the cost of hiring a plumber to connect the water and sewer to their home. It was originally for low-income residents but now includes moderate income residents at 80 percent (%) of the area median income (AMI). The program provides \$2,000.00 towards the \$5,000.00 assessment and \$900.00 for a plumber to connect, and is not available for vacant or rental properties.

The program could be increased from 80 to 120% AMI. It is funded through the General Fund and funding will have to be appropriated to increase and expand the program. The program must remain tied to the required water and sewer assessments. The current program is approximately \$20,000.00, but the cost of increasing the program is currently unknown. Over the lifetime of the program, about \$1 million has been spent. Use of the program has been limited in recent history, with 3 houses utilizing the program in 2023-2024 and 1 house in 2024-2025, however, there have been 609 households over the lifetime of the program.

Discussion ensued regarding raising the AMI, placing a specific amount into the program to help determine usage the first year, and increasing the connection fee from \$900.00.

Mr. Cauley stated the Economic and Community Development Department currently participates in the PWC annexation community meetings and their contact information is in the letters from PWC.

Dr. Douglas Hewett, City Manager, stated he will work with staff to bring back different options and PWC to create common language for the assessment and the program. Discussion ensued.

MOTION: Council Member Hondros moved to receive the report and have staff return with program options by the May Work Session
SECOND: Council Member McMillan
VOTE: UNANIMOUS (9-0)

5.05 Senior Technology Literacy Initiative

Mr. Christopher Williams, Management Analyst, presented this item with aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated the purpose was to evaluate technology access and learning opportunities for seniors, with a focus on expanding the technology learning resources, assessing feasibility of donated devices, and improving access.

There are currently technology classes in partnership with the Cumberland County Library at both Senior Centers. The City Information Technology (IT) Department procured 20 iPads with Wi-Fi that will be deployed to Parks & Recreation for the next phase of implementation at a total investment of \$9,500.00. Staff is working with community partners such as the Cumberland County Council on Older Adults and the Fayetteville-Cumberland Youth Council (FCYC). FCYC is focused on developing an intergenerational program where the students design and deliver training at the Senior Centers and work with the Council on Older Adults. Mr. Williams stated the recommendations are to continue the training efforts provided by the library, authorize IT to acquire additional devices for the courses as needed, and support FCYC

Mr. Willie Henry, Chief Information Officer, stated with the procurement of the devices, we are partnering with Parks and Recreation to teach the youth to develop programs and provide the training at the Senior Centers. The students receive the credit, and the seniors receive the training. Dr. Douglas Hewett, City Manager, stated to ensure we are providing the services where there is the most need, staff will work on creating a technology literacy survey and allow the tablets available for check out while at the Senior Center. This will help determine if the issue is literacy or access.

Council Member Davis recommended reaching out to non-profits that focus on older adults to help create the program.

MOTION: Council Member Jones moved to receive the report.
SECOND: Council Member Thompson
VOTE: UNANIMOUS (9-0)

5.06 Gun Safety Billboards

Dr. Andrew Mansell, City Manager's Office Intern, presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated staff identified several public awareness campaign options for gun safety. It is understood that different approaches reach different people, therefore, potential campaign options include local radio, community engagement events in partnership with the Fayetteville Police Department, social media/digital advertising, digital billboards, and participation in NC S.A.F.E. (Secure All Firearms Effectively) Week through the Office of Community Safety (OCS). Dr. Mansell also provided potential campaign slogans.

The City's Marketing and Communications (MarCom) team has identified several communication channels that could support a public awareness campaign promoting responsible firearm storage. Through the City's FY26 contract with Cumulus Media, messaging could be placed on local radio stations WFNC AM 640, Magic 106.9, Rock 103, and Q98, with additional stations operated by Beasley Media Group considered if expanded coverage is desired. Digital advertising opportunities could include placements through local platforms such as CityView and targeted advertisements on the City's social media channels, along with high-visibility messaging through digital billboards at key locations across the city. The City could

also leverage its existing communication channels, including FayTV/Spectrum Channel 7, the City Manager's E-Newsletter, and official social media platforms, where short video messages from Council Members or community partners could reinforce campaign messaging. In addition, the Fayetteville Police Department has agreed to support the campaign by incorporating firearm safety messaging into its community movie night events, providing a family-friendly opportunity to share responsible firearm storage information and broader safety education. OCS has also identified an opportunity to expand outreach by partnering with NC S.A.F.E. Week, a statewide initiative held each June that promotes responsible firearm storage and public education aimed at reducing firearm-related injuries and deaths.

Council Members recommended including WIDU, Beasley Broadcasting, Fayetteville Press, other printed media, and possible streaming services.

Dr. Mansell stated while all the currently recommended options are free or already included in current contracts, if Council chose to, \$5,000.00 could be used to funds ads on social media and streaming services.

Council Member Greene requested it come back with associated costs in the budget cycle.

MOTION: Council Member McNair moved to direct staff to explore all options for implementing a public awareness campaign focused on firearm safety and responsible gun storage
SECOND: Council Member Thompson
VOTE: UNANIMOUS (9-0)

6.0 ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JENNIFER L. AYRE
City Clerk
040826

MITCH COLVIN
Mayor