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**FAYETTEVILLE CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL
JANUARY 5, 2026
2:00 P.M.**

Present: Mayor Mitch Colvin (arrived at 2:26 p.m.);

Council Members Stephon Ferguson (District 1); Malik Davis (District 2); Antonio Jones (District 3); D. J. Haire (District 4); Lynne Greene (District 5); Derrick Thompson (District 6); Brenda McNair (District 7); Shaun McMillan (District 8); Deno Hondros (District 9)

Others Present: Douglas Hewett, City Manager
Lachelle Pulliam, City Attorney
Kelly Strickland, Assistant City Manager
Adam Lindsay, Assistant City Manager
Jodi Phelps, Assistant City Manager
Kevin Dove, Fire Chief
Roberto Bryan, Police Chief
Willie Henry, Chief Information Officer
Tiffany Murray, Chief Financial Officer
Gerald Newton, Development Services Director
Sheila Thomas-Ambat, Public Services Director
Michael Gibson, Parks, Recreation, & Maintenance Director
Loren Bymer, Marketing & Communications Director
John Jones, Office of Community Safety Director
Christopher Cauley, Economic & Community Development Director
Albert Baker, Economic & Community Development Assistant Director
Jacqueline Abbott, Community Development Manager
Kimberly Toon, Purchasing Manager
Austin Amandolia, HR&A Consultant
Jimmy Plater, Redeploying American Veterans (RAV), President and CEO
Deborah Harris, Continuum of Care Chair
Robert Van Geons, Fayetteville-Cumberland Economic Development Corporation President and CEO
Mr. Dan LaMontagne, Senior Project Manager with Freese and Nichols
Jennifer Ayre, City Clerk
Members of the Press

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tem Thompson called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2.0 INVOCATION

The invocation was offered by Council Member Haire.

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 Haire moved to approve the agenda.

SECOND: Council Member Jones

VOTE: UNANIMOUS (9-0)

6.0 OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS

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6.01 Blount and Gillespie Redevelopment Efforts Update

Mr. Christopher Cauley, Economic & Community Development Director, presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Cauley stated the City has owned the property at the corner of Blount Street and Gillespie Street, but just recently acquired all the property. Staff partnered with HR&A to identify market potential, feasibility, and ways to support the downtown vision. Since 2008, the City has acquired a total of 41 parcels, leveraging \$6 million of Hope VI funding. The City later partnered with Red Rock Global for a study that focused on catalytic development potential in the areas of Upper Murchison, Lower Murchison, Massey Hill, and the Center City Action Park.

Mr. Austin Amandolia, Senior Analyst for HR&A, stated the City has finished Phase 1 of the development process, where a development and design vision is created to determine what is feasible on the site, but physically and financially. The City is now ready to advance to solicitation for a development partner. Fayetteville's market conditions favor the development of multi-family residential and retail, while office and hotel use may be less feasible in the current context. Office growth was also reviewed, identifying that job growth is slower, limiting speculative office space. However, targeted tenancing strategy could support office space for professional office spaces. The downtown areas have demonstrated the ability to drive new visitation by leveraging catalytic investments; Fayetteville needs to continue identifying strategic opportunities to enhance the hotel demand, and downtown could benefit from unique opportunity events. A community meeting was held in June 2025 that generated insight from over 45 participants. There was strong support for mixed-use development and active public spaces with a desire for outdoor dining, plazas, and cultural entertainment. Nearly 40 percent preferred natural play and lounge areas, 61 percent favored relatively dense mixed-use buildings, 37 percent of visitors were drawn downtown only by special events, and there is a desire for more everyday reasons to visit. Mr. Amandolia presented three preliminary site concepts created by MKSK Designs that align with the community's desire for mixed-use and green space with the identified market opportunities. With each of the concepts, the E.E. Smith House is not removed and is part of the concepts to help expand their programming opportunities. Concept 1 is the least dense and Concept 3 is the densest. Public investment is likely necessary to deliver the public amenities in the project.

Next steps are to advance a two-stage solicitation process through a request for qualifications (RFQ) and request for proposals (RFP), that will identify a qualified development partner who can deliver the project, proactively rezone the site to ensure the project can accommodate a dense mixed-use development, and explore the viability of providing a tax increment grant (TIG) in order to support the public aspects of the project. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Cauley stated the City has been putting policies in place to help incentivize developers but has not looked at it from a redevelopment priority corridor, but it is the next logical step. Mr. Cauley further stated creating the residential portion as mixed income approach can be challenging as the different funding sources for affordable housing and market rate housing typically do not work together. Instead of being a mixed income opportunity, it could be created in balanced approach where the different types are throughout the same neighborhood. Discussion ensued.

Consensus of Council was to receive the report and direct staff to complete necessary to have it ready for developers.

6.02 Receive Presentation from Redeploying American Veterans on a Proposed Veteran Tiny Home Community

Mr. Albert Baker, Economic & Community Development Assistant Director, introduced Mr. Jimmy Plater of Redeploying American Veterans (RAV), President and CEO. The Homelessness and Mental Health Committee heard the presentation during their September 4, 2025, meeting and Council requested to hear the presentation at today's Work Session. RAV's is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to determine a solution to end veteran homelessness by 2030.

Mr. Plater presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated RAV was created 18 months ago after learning about veterans becoming homeless upon exiting the military without a support system. As of 2024, approximately 32,882 veterans are homeless in the United States and approximately 18-20 percent (%) of veterans experiencing homelessness are in North Carolina. Some of the challenges veterans face are accessibility to affordable housing, insufficient support networks, lack of stable jobs that pay a livable wage, gaps in service providers, and mental and physical health. Mr. Plater stated theirs is a comprehensive solution with wraparound services through tiny homes, job training and an individualized support plan following a six-step process. Mr. Plater stated RAV could place ten tiny homes on a half-acre or twenty-two tiny homes on a full acre.

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By providing tiny homes, it could reduce the burden on emergency services and police, reduce unemployment, and position the City as a Veteran City. There are two proposed locations RAV is looking at which includes Johnson Street off of Shaw Road and Westcliff Road off of Bingham Road. Mr. Plater stated he has partnered with a Fortune 50 company that will cover all expenses except for the purchase of the land. Discussion ensued regarding the wrap around services.

Dr. Gerald Newton, Development Services Director, provided information on zoning requirements for tiny homes and stated approximately 15-18 units per acre can be accommodated. Under the building code, temporary structures such as pallet shelters, have different standards than permanent structures. The State is currently updating the building code that will provide standards for tiny homes. Dr. Newton stated there is a series of questions that must be answered to determine the needed zoning, which is based by use, not occupant.

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of Council was to receive the report and ask staff to work with RAV to discuss zoning and available land, then bring back to Council for further discussion and send to the City-County Liaison Committee.

6.03 Receive Presentation from the Fayetteville-Cumberland County Continuum of Care on the annual Point in Time Count

Ms. Jacqueline Abbott, Community Development Manager, introduced Dr. Deborah Harris, Chair of the Fayetteville-Cumberland County Continuum of Care. The Homelessness and Mental Health Committee heard the presentation during their September 4, 2025, meeting and Council requested to hear the presentation at today's Work Session.

Dr. Harris presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated the presentation would help provide an enhanced understanding of how we remain informed about the unhoused community and acknowledge the challenges and opportunities. The Point in Time (PIT) Count information takes 4-6 months to be approved for distribution. The 2025 PIT count was originally scheduled for January 23, 2025, but due to inclement weather the date changed and some people were not counted. Despite this, there is still confidence in the data. 383 people were counted during the annual 2025 PIT count, 272 being unsheltered, 47 in emergency shelters, and 64 in transitional housing. Using a four-year comparison, the transitional housing doubled from 40 in 2022 to 64 in 2025. The PIT Count only focuses on 24-hours, but the Homeless Management Intake System (HMIS) is used year-round for reference. The coordinated intake system does not provide housing services and the number of referrals are not the number of people served. Referrals are for each need and there can be multiple referrals for one person.

The three most common needs throughout the year are emergency shelter, utility assistance, and rental assistance. Dr. Harris provided housing needs data from 2022-2024 including transitional, permanent supportive, permanent, rapid rehousing, shelter stays, and white flag stays. Discussion ensued regarding housing needs through CoC Nova Funds and Grant Funds. The CoC needs continued assistance, funding, and collaboration.

Dr. Harris stated 2026 PIT Count is scheduled for January 26, 2026, and volunteers are needed. Residents can go to the website to sign up.

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of Council was to receive the report.

6.04 Receive Presentation Regarding Completed Study - Black Voices Museum

Mr. Robert Van Geons, FCEDC President and CEO, stated in 2024 the group floated the radical yet heartfelt idea for the Black Voices Museum. Fayetteville and Cumberland County supported the idea and helped fund the work exploring how this historic southern city can become a national leader in how communities can discuss and address historic inequities in race, justice, and economic opportunity. With a two-fold goal of documenting, preserving, and celebrating black history while inspiring the next generation of leaders through arts, action, and advocacy. This presentation is the culmination of 18 months of work.

Dr. Dauv Evans, Community Outreach Consultant with Black Voices Museum, presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated the focus of the project was what stories are important, what does it mean to empower black voices, and what are the possibilities

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for the museum. Outreach included interviews, vision workshops, pop-up events, community surveys, and the project website. Fayetteville, NC has historical cultural and geographical significance, making it an ideal location for the Black Voices Museum. Key takeaways and themes of the museum included the power of storytelling, honoring local voices, creating a community-centered approach, becoming a catalyst for revitalization, integrating with Fayetteville's cultural ecosystem, being a dynamic and inclusive space, creating programs of empowerment and advocacy, and focusing on youth as a priority.

Mr. Roger Smith, Principal and Design Director with Gensler, stated a vision was created to preserve Fayetteville's rich black history and culture. The four pillars of the vision include, arts and culture, an empowerment hub that fosters economic opportunity, centers for social equity, and a haven for healing and spaces for reflection and healing. As a precedent, multiple other museums were looked at across the country. All of the museums were essential in creating a plan and potential for the project. The project would be centered in downtown Fayetteville between Person Street and Otis Jones Parkway. The words from the poem "Lift Every Voice and Sing" would create the entryway and include multiple program spaces and exhibitions. The hope is to create a new institution that creates a place for history and healing. Mr. Reggie Truckson, Senior Associate and Architect with Gensler, stated the project is currently completing the institutional planning phase but still has a long way to go to begin facility and operational planning and finally opening and operations. The visitor experience is most important, and it needs to be immersive and transformational. The building needs to fit on the current site and the building presented would be about 83,000 square feet and cost between \$175 million and \$215 million with startup costs of \$10.2 million with construction starting in the first quarter of 2029. The projected attendance is 174,000 annually and will include funding from admission fees, business rentals, and community events creating an estimated \$2.2 million in annual income. Operating costs would be about \$3.6 million creating an annual need for support of \$4 million, which is on par nationally.

Mr. Van Geons stated there are already conversations underway with private foundations, and the next step if the project moves forward, is to request additional support to achieve fundraising goals. The presentation is the package that would be needed to get commitments and raise funds. Council Member Malik Davis questioned how the project can maintain its integrity by not allowing investors to change things but also keeping the investors happy. The organization filed, and was granted, a 501(c)3 nonprofit status to create the founding board, which will focus on maintaining integrity throughout the project. The concepts, scope, and scale of the history needs to be identified next and create an institute of public policy to address ongoing issues of injustice.

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of Council was to accept the report.

6.05 Parks & Recreation Bond Project Update and Public Safety Bond Project Update

Mr. Dan LaMontagne, Senior Project Manager with Freese and Nichols, serving with the City's Construction Management Division, presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated Freese and Nichols was contracted to review the capital construction program and recommend changes and best practices. The Parks and Recreation Bond and Public Safety Bond Projects as well as some of the Capital Improvement Projects will be presented.

There are a total of 20 projects with 7 in design phase, 1 in bid phase, 2 in construction phase, and 7 in procurement phase. Two projects are on hold, Hay Street Parking Deck, and Fire Station 4 and the Airport Master Plan is currently considered a study. The 911 Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) currently has site location options under review and coordination with the County is ongoing. The schedule is contingent upon site selection and consolidation decisions. Fire Station 16 has 60 percent (%) of the design plans completed and Barr & Barr was selected as Construction Manager At Risk (CMAR), while coordination with Cumming Group as the Owner's Advisor (OA) is ongoing. The Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) is anticipated in March 2026. Fire Station 9 land purchase completed and currently in negotiations with the design architect, Davis Kane, on the scope and fee. The CMAR request for qualifications (RFQ) will close in January. Coordination with McDonough Bolyard Peck (MBP) as the OA is ongoing. The schedule is dependent on the architect contract. Cape Fear River Park has 95% of plans delivered and permitting is expected to be completed in January, with project completion in the summer. Martin Luther King Jr. Park has 95% of the design completed, permitting is in progress and the MLK Committee coordination is ongoing. The schedule is contingent on the submission by the MLK Committee design consultant. Veterans Park II has 100% design plans that are due this month, with permitting in progress, and will go to bid in February. Blue Street Senior Center Upfit has an architect that has prepared a preliminary design, with the final design to be completed this month, and it will go out to bid in March. McArthur Road Sports Complex bid was posted in

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December and construction bids are due in February with construction completion anticipated in March/April 2027. The Market House repurposing light work has been completed, kiosks are being ordered, and the road work invitation to bid is going out later this month, with an anticipated construction completion date in December 2026. The Courts at Glenville Lake building construction is near completion, the exhibition court final grading is underway, and paving will begin this month. Completion is expected by the end of January. A list of projects in the procurement phase was presented.

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of Council was to accept the report.

Mayor Colvin recessed the meeting at 5:33 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 5:47 p.m.

6.06 Downtown Municipal Service District Boundary and Inclusion of Park View Townhomes

Mr. Christopher Cauley, Economic and Community Development Director, presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated at the September 2, 2025, Work Session staff was directed to review the inclusion of Park View Townhomes to the Municipal Service District (MSD). The MSD was established in 1978, expanded in 1983, and is renewed every five years. The current rate is \$0.1489 per \$100.00 of assessed value. Park View Townhomes was developed at 301 Bragg Blvd and was a former Days Inn property, which the City sold to the developer of Park View Townhomes at market value. Park View Townhomes has 47 townhomes valued at approximately \$12.98 million. There are other individual parcels within the MSD that are exclusively residential.

Park View Townhomes lies within the MSD. The MSD was initially designed to promote downtown revitalization through business development, events, and placemaking efforts. Downtown has evolved into a mixed-use environment. Park View directly benefits to the proximity of downtown. If Council removes Park View from the MSD it would lose \$19,300.00 in annual revenue. To maintain the current level of service the MSD tax rate would need to be increased, use the general fund to help subsidize, or discuss a diminished level of service by Cool Springs Downtown District.

To remove the property from the MSD per the North Carolina General Statutes 160A-538.1, a property owner must submit a written request to remove the owners tract or parcel of land and state the reasons why it is not in need of the services, facilities, or functions of the MSD. Upon receipt, the City Council would hold a public hearing. If Council finds the tract or parcel is not in need of the services, facilities, or functions of the MSD to a greater extent than the remainder of the City, the Council, by ordinance, may redefine the MSD to remove the tract or parcel. Changes to the MSD only take effect at the beginning of the fiscal year, July 1.

Discussion ensued regarding what types of benefits being in the MSD provides. Mr. Cauley stated MSD benefits include adjacency to special events, downtown walkability, and a premium to the property values. Park View Townhomes covers the cost of fixing its streets and trash removal. Dr. Douglas Hewett, City Manager, stated that Council could, by choice, remove an area from the MSD, but questioned how the City would continue to pay for downtown projects. The MSD is slightly more than \$300,000.00 annually. The goal is to grow the development that is here already out further, and that requires funding.

Council Member Hondros stated Council needs to be cognizant that if the decision is made to remove Park View, other properties within the MSD are interested in doing the same thing.

Ms. Lachelle Pulliam, City Attorney, stated that the emails requesting to remove Park View from the MSD meet the burden of written notice, which triggers the City to be required to hold the public hearing. The Council will then make the determination of the removal. And subsequent to that, the ordinance must be heard at two meetings before it can go into effect at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of Council was to move this to a Public Hearing on February 9, 2026, Regular Meeting.

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6.07 Consider Changes to City Council Policy 155.6 - Real Property – Lease

Ms. Lachelle Pulliam, City Attorney, stated at a previous meeting, the policy was recommended to City Council from the Policies Review Committee and Council Member McMillan had additional recommended changes and the motion was made to bring this to a work session for discussion. The City Attorney's Office worked with him to incorporate the changes into the policy for Council's consideration. Ms. Pulliam stated there are a number of changes and many line up with the General Statute and the Code of Ethics. There is a proposed prohibition against City Council members and City staff from renting from the City. There are currently two employees who rent two of the residential properties near the airport and this would affect them. Currently, leases that are 12 months or less, General Statute does not require any special notices, and it was proposed to publish them for 30 calendar days before execution; for lease renewals opening them up to the general public each time be it residential or commercial instead of giving the current renter preferential consideration.

Dr. Douglas Hewett, City Manager stated the City would be precluded, without Council approval, from leasing space that is owned by an employee or elected official. Mayor Colvin recommended creating disclosure requirements for renting both to and from the City. Dr. Hewett provided a list of all leases from the City.

Council Member McMillan recommended removing "except that no City Council Member or Employee may lease from the City" from Section III.B.3.

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of Council was to send City Council Policy 155.6-Real Property – Lease to the Policy Committee for February.

6.08 Consider Proposed Amendments to Parades, Motorcades, Special Events and Demonstrations Ordinance

Ms. Lachelle Pulliam, City Attorney stated this item is a proposal for three separate provisions of the picketing ordinance which also addresses parades and assembly. When talking about regulating speech it is regulating personal freedoms, however, they are not absolute, and governments have the right to implement rules to protect public safety. The changes are related to time, place, and manner of speech.

Ms. Erin Swinney, Police Attorney, stated these are a few amendments to the parades, motorcades, special events, and demonstrations ordinance. Section 24-282 Subsection 5 change would create a radius of 10 feet from the perimeter of any outdoor dining, and no person may be allowed to approach someone within 8 feet without the person's consent, which includes oral protest, counseling, passing flyers, or displaying a sign. This amendment is based on the case law of *Hill v. Colorado* that determined no one has a right to press good ideas on an unwilling recipient.

Mayor Colvin stated the focus is to give people permission to continue to picket, while still allowing people to not be interrupted or required to engage.

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of Council was to table this item for 30-60 days as a special meeting. Council Member Hondros was opposed to the consensus motion.

7.0 ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

JENNIFER L. AYRE
City Clerk
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MITCH COLVIN
Mayor