



## **City of Buena Vista City Council**

### **Regular Council Meeting**

February 6, 2025, 6:00 PM  
Council Chambers – 2039 Sycamore Avenue

The City Council for the City of Buena Vista met for a Regular Council Meeting on Thursday, February 6, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Mayor Tyson Cooper

Vice-Mayor Danny Staton  
Melvin Henson  
Michelle Poluikis

Steve Webb  
Stanley Coffey  
Ronald Cash

**Members Absent:** None

#### **ADG #1: CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND PRAYER**

Mayor Cooper called the meeting to order and delivered the opening prayer.

#### **ADG #2: APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Vice-Mayor Staton moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Councilmember Coffey, and carried by Council.

#### **ADG #3: APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 16, 2025, REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING, PUBLIC HEARINGS, & EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Councilmember Coffey, seconded by Councilmember Henson, and carried by Council with Mayor Cooper abstaining.

#### **ADG #4: RECOGNITION/COMMUNICATION FROM VISITORS**

- Mary Huffman, 73 Deer Haven Drive, requested that Council, along with Lexington and Rockbridge County, address the homeless situation in the area. Mrs. Huffman noted that there are individuals residing in the parks and along the river. She recalled a couple that she met in December and there weren't any available options to help them out like there used to be. She mentioned that Lexington used to provide motel vouchers or transportation to Staunton or Roanoke to homeless shelters, but they no longer provide those services. Mrs. Huffman proposed that the "Madison House" on Magnolia Avenue could be a great facility to accommodate up to 18 homeless individuals for a night or two and requested that Council explore this option.

#### **ADG #5: REPORTS**

##### **1. Mayor**

None.

## **2. City Manager**

Mr. Tyree advised that there will be a Food Safety and Security meeting held at The Advancement Foundation on March 6th at 5:30 PM. Senator Mark Warner will be joining the meeting via video and representatives from the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Forestry will also be there.

Mr. Tyree also reminded Council of the link to the Housing Study that was completed and advised that there is a webinar scheduled for February 26th at 11:00 AM.

The three finalists have been chosen in the Town Square naming contest. After reviewing dozens of creative submissions from the community, the selection committee narrowed the choices to three names that reflect the city's history. There are narratives that highlight why each of those names is a great fit and the local significance that those names represent. There are voting boxes at local businesses and other locations around town.

Applications for the Façade Improvement grant are due by February 7th. This program offers an exciting opportunity for property owners and tenants in designated areas of the City to enhance the exterior appearance of their buildings and to support the City's ongoing efforts to revitalize key business districts and gateway corridors.

## **3. City Attorney**

None.

## **4. Council Committees/Representatives**

### **a. Budget & Finance**

Mr. Webb reported that the Committee met on January 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss the upcoming budget year. He mentioned that they are still waiting for some department budgets, so that is putting them a little bit behind. Mr. Webb also advised that moving forward, anytime that money is reappropriated, even within the same department, Council will have to vote on an appropriation resolution to create the proper paper trail and make things clearer for the finance department and auditors. The Committee is still developing the budget and have several more meetings scheduled.

### **b. Outdoor Spaces**

Mr. Henson reported that the Committee will hold a meeting on March 1<sup>st</sup> to consider their top three choices of projects to present to Council at the March 15<sup>th</sup> retreat.

### **c. School Facilities**

Mrs. Poluikis reported that they had a meeting last night, February 5<sup>th</sup>, and they discussed three different possibilities; the possibility of what would happen if we do nothing, which is not a good prospect; the possibility of building a new middle school; and the possibility of constructing a unified building for Pre-K through 7<sup>th</sup> grade. She noted that this will be expensive, and they are looking at different funding sources to hopefully help alleviate some of the burden on the citizens.

Mr. Cash added that we are looking at a cost in the neighborhood of \$60M to build the school facilities that we need to sustain our education program in the City. He noted that the high school is almost 25 years old and also has issues that are going to be expensive to fix, even without addressing the elementary and middle school needs. We can potentially get up to 30% of the cost covered by state funds, but that leaves 70% for the citizens to shoulder the burden

of. Mr. Cash expressed that the children are the future of the City, and we need to take things to heart where the children and their education are concerned.

Councilmember Henson also reported that he attended the Fire Department Banquet and highlighted that the FD responded to 589 calls last year with 180 of those being EMS calls.

Vice-Mayor Staton announced that Councilmember Henson and Herbie Huffman were both recognized at the FD Banquet for 50 years of service, and Mr. Henson also received the Soaring Eagle Award in honor of Pidge Grow, for a firefighter showing outstanding excellence; this award is only given when the Board decides someone is worthy.

## **5. Department Heads/Constitutional Officers/Court Clerks**

### **Edward Armentrout – Parks & Recreation**

- They installed a new point of sale system at Glen Maury Park in January; it has a newer system and should be a smooth transition
- As the new website is being developed, they are planning to implement a reservation system where people can reserve and pay online. The hope is to have this up and running by mid-summer.
- He is working with the Economic Development department to create a new Park Map.
- They will be joining forces with the Fincastle Baptist Church this year for the Easter egg hunt, which is going to double our capacity with roughly 20,000 eggs and an estimated 350-400 attendees. This will be held on April 19<sup>th</sup>.
- They have installed a lot of new fixtures in some of the restrooms and new heaters in the main bathhouse.
- They remodeled the band room to the left of the stage; this is where the entertainers gather during shows. They replaced a wall, painted, installed new light fixtures, and new carpet.
- Shelter 4 will be up and running this spring. All that is left to do there is seeding and a little bit of cleanup. They will be putting in horseshoe pits and grills there as well; they are also putting new grills in at each shelter.
- He worked with Tom Roberts to acquire some new toys and replace some old ones at Penny Park, which was mostly grant-funded.
- Along with RARO, they are planning to install a new scoreboard at Secrist Field and complete the dugout at Camden Field.
- Donnie Sizer built twenty new picnic tables; six went to Town Square and the rest will be distributed as needed to replace old ones.
- The following list of projects are to be completed this spring as funding is available:
  - Lighting repairs at the multipurpose pavilion
  - Roof replacement on the Paxton House restroom
  - Paint and repair stalls in the pool restrooms
  - Privacy screens at the tennis court and pool
  - Roof and floor repairs at the double decker
  - New lifeguard stands
  - Expand the soccer field for additional parking

- Add nine more holes to the disc golf course
- Lay gravel at the Camden Field track
- Overseeding at the campground, Town Square, and the front lawn of City Hall

## 6. Invited Community Organizations

### Jen Carpenter – Main Street Buena Vista

Brooke Dalton introduced Jen Carpenter as the new Executive Director of MSBV. Mrs. Carpenter reported that she had spent the last two days in Richmond meeting executive directors from other Main Street programs across the state.

## **ADG #6: CONSIDER APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES:**

None.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **OB #1: SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE & GRANT A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT FOR THE 2500 BLOCK OF Sycamore Avenue**

As there were no changes to the text, Councilmember Coffey moved to read by title only, seconded by Vice-Mayor Staton, and carried by Council.

Councilmember Henson spoke about history and what would have happened if we had denied or shut down some of the developments of the past. He noted that while we need housing for growth, he questioned if this is the right type of house for this site and if the site is big enough to safely handle the project.

Councilmember Webb thanked everyone for their comments and concerns on this request. Having taken those into consideration and after reviewing the current zoning map, he does not believe it is in the best interest of the City or the citizens to change the zoning as requested. He added that this proposed zoning will increase the density and change the nature of the R3 District.

Councilmember Webb made a motion to **DENY** the request for rezoning with Councilmember Coffey seconding. Ms. Burch completed a roll call vote of Council as follows:

Member	Present	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain
Councilmember Henson	X		X		
Councilmember Poluikis	X		X		
Councilmember Webb	X		X		
Councilmember Coffey	X		X		
Councilmember Cash	X			X	
Vice-Mayor Staton	X		X		
Mayor Cooper	X			X	

With a vote of 5-2, the rezoning request was **denied**.

**OB #2: SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE TO GRANT A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW A BED & BREAKFAST INN AT 2056 & 2068 CHESTNUT AVENUE**

As there were no changes to the text, Councilmember Henson moved to read by title only, seconded by Councilmember Webb, and carried by Council.

Councilmember Coffey brought up concerns about monitoring the occupancy and duration of stays. Mr. Kearney advised that the City currently has an ordinance dealing with bed & breakfasts, and if Council is concerned about the reporting or how it's done, we may need to look at that current ordinance and see if there is anything we can add to it. This property will have to comply with the current ordinance, and if they don't they would be in violation and could potentially lose their license. Mr. Roberts added that they will be required to file monthly gross receipts and nights of occupancy for his lodging tax. Our current ordinance also requires that they must maintain a record book of who has stayed there and the duration of their stay, which is available for City inspection at any time.

Councilmember Henson requested that parking be restricted on 21st Street on Sunday mornings to accommodate church parking.

Councilmember Henson moved to **approve** the Ordinance with Councilmember Coffey seconding. Ms. Burch completed a roll call vote of Council as follows:

Member	Present	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain
Councilmember Henson	X		X		
Councilmember Poluikis	X		X		
Councilmember Webb	X			X	
Councilmember Coffey	X			X	
Councilmember Cash	X		X		
Vice-Mayor Staton	X		X		
Mayor Cooper	X		X		

The following Ordinance was **approved** by a vote of 5-2.

**Conditional Use Permit  
Lots 3-8, Block 57, Section 2  
2056 & 2068 Chestnut Avenue**

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BUENA VISTA, VIRGINIA**, that after a duly called public hearing, in accordance with the general welfare of the citizens of Buena Vista and in accordance with good zoning practices, pursuant to Section 604.03-6 and 714.08 of the Land Development Regulations, a Conditional Use Permit shall be issued for the operation of a Bed and Breakfast Inn at 2056 Chestnut Avenue and a Bed and Breakfast Inn at 2068 Chestnut Avenue.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** that pursuant to Section 714.08-3 of the Land Development Regulations, special events shall be permitted on the premises described above with the following requirements:

- a. Events will only be held outdoors
- b. Maximum of 50 event attendees

- c. Two bathrooms are available inside buildings for event attendees. Additional portable toilets will be brought in if required by the Health Department based on number of attendees, food service, etc.
- d. Events will not be held between the hours of 10:00 PM and 8:00 PM
- e. Amplified sound, if any, shall not be plainly audible to a reasonable person within a closed residence any closer than two hundred fifty (250) feet to the event
- f. If more parking than adjacent street and site parking is needed, shuttle(s) will be provided to nearby parking lot(s)

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** that the Conditional Use Permit to conduct special events on the premises shall be subject to annual renewal by the Council of the City of Buena Vista pursuant to Section 802.03-11 of the Land Development Regulations. The Council shall consider the criteria found in Section 802.03-5 of the Land Development Regulations and impacts, if any, of the event operations of surrounding properties.

This Ordinance shall be effective 30 days following adoption by City Council.

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Tyson T. Cooper, Mayor

Attest:

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Sarah M. Burch, Clerk of Council

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Date of Adoption

**OB #3: SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE TO ABANDON 125 UNDEVELOPED FEET OF LOCUST AVENUE**

There was a minor change to the text of the Ordinance. Ms. Burch read the following proposed Ordinance.

**Abandonment of Public Right-of-Way  
Southern 125' of 3600 Block of Locust Avenue**

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BUENA VISTA, VIRGINIA**, that in accordance with Section 15.2-2006 through 2008 of the Code of Virginia, as amended, that the public right-of-way described in "Exhibit A" and "Exhibit B" attached hereto, (the "Property"), shall be vacated and abandoned upon receipt of the consideration noted in "Exhibit A" and the completion of the conditions outlined below.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** that as a condition of the aforesaid abandonment and vacation, the City retains a perpetual easement over, under, and across the Property for the installation, maintenance, repair, or replacement of all utilities, including, but not limited to, water and sewer lines; electric; cable; telephone; and gas lines; and garbage pick-up.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** that this ordinance shall be recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court for the City of Buena Vista, Virginia, and indexed under the names listed in "Exhibit A."

This Ordinance shall be effective 30 days following adoption by City Council.

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Tyson T. Cooper, Mayor

Attest:

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Sarah M. Burch, Clerk of Council

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Date of Adoption

Councilmember Henson asked if it would be possible for Mr. Pooley to lease Treemont's half of the right-of-way from them to accommodate his equipment parking. Mr. Roberts noted that the Humphreys are interested in the full width of the ROW and Treemont has verbally expressed that they are willing to quit claim their half to the Humphreys; they will sign the paperwork if/when this is approved. Mr. Kearney also clarified that any time the city abandons a road, it technically goes down the middle to the adjacent property owners and if either of those property owners is not interested in purchasing their half they may sign a quit claim deed, and the property owner on the other side has the right to purchase the full width of the road, which is what is happening here.

Councilmember Webb made a motion to **approve** the Ordinance with Councilmember Coffey seconding. Ms. Burch completed a roll call vote of Council as follows:

Member	Present	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain
Councilmember Henson	X			X	
Councilmember Poluikis	X		X		
Councilmember Webb	X		X		
Councilmember Coffey	X		X		
Councilmember Cash	X		X		
Vice-Mayor Staton	X		X		
Mayor Cooper	X		X		

The Ordinance was **approved** by a vote of 6-1.

**OB #4: SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CITY CODE CHAPTER 14, ARTICLE III: EROSION & SEDIMENTATION CONTROL**

As there were no changes to the text, Councilmember Henson moved to read by title only, seconded by Councilmember Coffey, and carried by Council.

Councilmember Webb made a motion to **approve** the Ordinance, with Councilmember Henson seconding. Ms. Burch took a roll call of Council as follows:

Member	Present	Absent	Yes	No	Abstain
Councilmember Henson	X		X		
Councilmember Poluikis	X		X		
Councilmember Webb	X		X		
Councilmember Coffey	X		X		
Councilmember Cash	X		X		
Vice-Mayor Staton	X		X		
Mayor Cooper	X		X		

The following Ordinance was unanimously **approved**.

**City Code Text Amendment**  
**Chapter 14, Article III: Erosion & Sedimentation Control**

**AN ORDINANCE** to amend Chapter 14, Article III, Section 14-47 of the Code of the City of Buena Vista, as amended, for the purpose of changing what construction activity requires a land disturbing permit.

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BUENA VISTA, VIRGINIA**, that after a duly called public hearing, in accordance with the general welfare of the citizens of Buena Vista, subparagraph "j" of paragraph (2) of the definition of "Land-disturbing activity" found in Section 14-47 is amended to read as shown below.

*j. Disturbed land areas of less than 10,000 square feet in size, except those directly related to the construction of a new building other than a residential accessory building.*

This Ordinance shall be effective 30 days following adoption by City Council.

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Tyson T. Cooper, Mayor

Attest:

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Sarah M. Burch, Clerk of Council

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Date of Adoption

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **NB #1: APPROVAL OF AN APPROPRIATION RESOLUTION**

Mr. Bolster informed Council that the resolution is broken down into three sections: the first is the general fund; the second is parks and recreation; and the third is the water fund. The Byrne JAG is a reimbursement grant that was awarded in June 2024 by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services. The program includes two law enforcement personnel and the purchase and installation of a Gridless Sentry camera system in the City. The Façade Improvement Grant is a reimbursement grant as part of the Community Development Block Grant. The Department of Housing and Community Development CDBG is also a reimbursement grant for the downtown revitalization program which we are working with the CSPDC on. The other appropriations in the GF section are related to the action taken at the last meeting in regard to the remaining ARPA funds.

Mayor Cooper read the following resolution:

### **Appropriation Resolution**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of Buena Vista, Virginia, that the following appropriations are and the same is hereby made, for the period ending **June 30, 2025**, from the UNAPPROPRIATED SURPLUS of the **GENERAL FUND** and expended as follows:

#### **Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (BVPD Community Resource Program - 12 months)**

10.3101.50500	Administration	\$108,758.00
10.3101.51450	FICA	\$8,320.00
10.3104.51500	Retirement - VRS	\$12,888.00
10.3101.51550	Health Insurance	\$29,194.00
10.3101.51600	Group Life Insurance	\$1,283.00
10.3101.51650	Workers Compensation	\$4,285.00
10.3101.52080	Police Equipment	<u>\$60,000.00</u>
<b>Sub-total 1</b>		<b>\$224,728.00</b>

#### **Façade Improvement Grant Program**

10.3401.60270	Façade Grant	<u>\$12,410.00</u>
<b>Sub-total 2</b>		<b>\$12,410.00</b>

#### **DHCD CDBG Buena Vista Downtown Revitalization Grant**

10.3402.60680	Connect BV Grant	<u>\$48,200.00</u>
<b>Sub-total 3</b>		<b>\$48,200.00</b>

#### **Town Square Project**

10.3402.56186	Town Square Project	<u>\$100,000.00</u>
<b>Sub-total 4</b>		<b>\$100,000.00</b>

#### **Sidewalks, City-wide Repairs**

10.4102.82050	Capital Outlay	<u>\$216,087.00</u>
<b>Sub-total 5</b>		<b>\$216,087.00</b>

<b>Maury River Senior Center Roof Repair</b>		
10.4302.82050	Capital Outlay	\$60,000.00
<b>Sub-total 6</b>		<b>\$60,000.00</b>
<b>Glen Maury Park Pool Renovation Project (transfer from General Fund)</b>		
10.9314.67600	Transfer to Parks & Recreation Fund	\$750,000.00
<b>Sub-total 7</b>		<b>\$750,000.00</b>
<b>6th Street Water Line Extension (transfer from General Fund)</b>		
10.9314.67660	Transfer to Water Fund	\$20,000.00
<b>Sub-total 8</b>		<b>\$20,000.00</b>
<b>Total General Fund Budget Amendment</b>		<b>\$1,431,425.00</b>

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of Buena Vista, Virginia, that the following appropriations are, and the same is hereby made, for the period ending **June 30, 2025**, from the UNAPPROPRIATED SURPLUS of the **PARKS AND RECREATION FUND** and expended as follows:

<b>Glen Maury Park Pool Renovation Project</b>		
12.7105.50400	ARP Fixed Assets	\$750,000.00
<b>Sub-total 1</b>		<b>\$750,000.00</b>
<b>Total Parks &amp; Recreation Fund Budget Amendment</b>		<b>\$750,000.00</b>

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of Buena Vista, Virginia, that the following appropriations are, and the same is hereby made, for the period ending **June 30, 2025**, from the UNAPPROPRIATED SURPLUS of the **WATER FUND** and expended as follows:

<b>6th Street Water Line Extension</b>		
13.1811.82050	Capital Outlay	\$20,000.00
<b>Sub-total 1</b>		<b>\$20,000.00</b>
<b>Total Water Fund Budget Amendment</b>		<b>\$20,000.00</b>

**Approved:** This 6<sup>th</sup> day of February 2025.

Attest:

Tyson T. Cooper, Mayor

Sarah M. Burch, Clerk of Council

Councilmember Webb moved to **approve** the Resolution as presented. Councilmember Henson seconded, and it was carried by Council.

## **NB #2: PRESENTATION OF TREE CANOPY MASTER PLAN**

Ms. Kathryn Epstein, Ms. Jenny Johnson, and Ms. Elise Sheffield are educators with Boxerwood that are collaborating with Tom Roberts to help launch Buena Vista's Tree Canopy Project. The project is completely grant funded with no cost to the city. Ms. Epstein reported that she first began working to launch this program with a group of PMHS students last year by building a tree nursery, designing project materials, interviewing experts, and talking with community members. Two of those students were Amelia Clark and Kylin Pentecost who spoke a bit about their experiences as well as what they've learned about the benefits of trees.

Miss Clark stated that her favorite part of working on this project has been making more social relationships and improving her knowledge of ecology and nature. She shared that there are mental, economic, and natural benefits to trees. Mentally, trees have been found to offer a wide range of benefits that extend beyond environmental improvements. Miss Clark also shared that according to an article in National Geographic, many scientific studies have shown that being around trees can reduce blood pressure as well as stress-related hormones, cortisol and adrenaline. Researchers have also found significant improvements in mental health conditions in urban areas where more trees were planted.

Miss Pentecost noted that her favorite part of being involved in the project was planting the first trees in the nursery that they helped build. The benefit of trees that she shared was related to heat islands, which are urbanized areas that are hotter than more rural outlying areas. Trees can help address heat islands in cities because they naturally decrease heat by releasing cooler air through evaporation and transpiration and creating moisture. Trees also reduce energy costs and create much better air for breathing.

Ms. Lauren Duran, who works for the Green Infrastructure Center, a nonprofit organization out of Charlottesville, was the next to speak about the project. She stated that the project is being funded through the Virginia Department of Forestry. She shared that for every dollar spent on urban trees, the average return on investment is \$2.25; this is why the Department of Forestry is funding the project, providing technical support to the City to gather data and create a plan for investing in city trees. Ms. Duran provided some additional benefits of trees. One tree can capture and filter thousands of gallons of stormwater in their canopy and infiltrate it into the surrounding soil. As they're doing that, they are reducing flooding as well as filtering out pollutants that would make it into the waterways. Trees also make cities and neighborhoods more beautiful, and this beauty translates into economic value. When people are looking to buy a house, they will pay up to 10 % more for a property that has a mature tree canopy on it. Additionally, shoppers will pay more and stay longer in well-treed shopping districts. Because of these benefits, or services, trees are considered infrastructure. She noted that cities manage their "gray infrastructure," such as roads, storm pipes, and bridges. One of the missions of her organization is to encourage cities to also map and manage their "green infrastructure" for the city to be healthy and vibrant. To plan for the future, they were able to map the tree canopy and potential planting areas across the City. Ms. Duran reported that the city currently has 45% tree canopy, and 502 acres of potential planting area and space for over 55,000 more trees. With this data, they can begin planning and thinking about places where trees could be planted for more shade, stormwater uptake, or for beautification. If the City

does nothing, we will lose tree canopy and the benefits those trees provide over the coming years. They are proposing that we set a tree canopy goal to maintain the current 45% canopy over the next 10 years and increase public engagement in tree planting and maintenance. They came up with a list of strategies to meet this goal, with the hopes of Buena Vista becoming a more vibrant, healthy city.

Mr. Roberts stated that while we are surrounded by forests, in the last few years we have seen more development which has led to losing trees within the City and many of our neighborhoods lack mature, healthy, attractive tree canopy. On top of the goal to maintain the 45% tree canopy, there is another goal to engage the public in a new way. Mr. Roberts shared some strategies to accomplish these goals. The first is to establish a Tree Board which would get citizens involved to advise us to plan projects, help plant and maintain trees, and to help educate the public; he noted that there is already some public interest in this Board. The next strategy is having specific locations for tree planting on public land. Examples of those include street trees in downtown, City parks, FEMA lots, and school properties. Other strategies include encouraging tree planting on private land, creating a master tree management plan for Glen Maury Park, designating a budgetary line item for tree and landscape maintenance, and establishing a tree ordinance protecting trees in the city. Mr. Roberts advised that all of these efforts will move us towards designation as Tree City USA. There is certain criteria that has to be met to get that designation, but it's something that lets people know that we are an attractive place that cares about our environment that has good tree canopy.

### **NB #3: PRESENTATION OF CITY HALL LANDSCAPING PLAN**

Mr. Roberts recalled that back in the fall, we assembled a committee to go through several iterations of the landscape design. He advised that if we were to hire a contractor to complete the design, it will cost around \$47,000 and will be done in a couple of months. What he is actually proposing is that we execute the plan over time and take advantage of some in-house resources, grants, and donations. He recommended using volunteers to do most of the planting, but having the larger trees professionally planted to ensure they are done properly. There is also an electronic message board being proposed in the plan that would go in front of City Hall; this would be a full-color electronic message board with a brick base (similar to the new one at Enderly).

Councilmember Webb brought up some concerns about being able to keep up with maintaining the new plants and trees. Mr. Roberts stated that he understands the concern, but if we want a city that looks attractive, we have to pay to maintain it. He added that we will absolutely look for opportunities with volunteer groups and potentially have business sponsorships of landscape planting areas; i.e., ABC Business pays "x" amount per year to sponsor the Hardee's island. Then we would put a sign that says, "sponsored by..." He added that we will work with grants, but generally, they pay you to put in new things, but not the maintenance of things, so we will continue to discuss the issue with Public Works about how we can strategize on maintenance. Councilmember Cash asked if we had considered hiring an arborist. Mr. Roberts suggested that this would be a great opportunity to have some of our existing staff cross train and get additional certifications, so they could help with this when they aren't doing their other jobs. Councilmember Coffey also suggested possibly contracting with a landscape company to do the maintenance.

#### **NB #4: DISCUSSION OF SLIVERS OF RIGHT-OF-WAY ON VISTA LINKS DRIVE**

Mr. Roberts recalled that he brought this to Council in the fall, and the big question after that meeting was about appropriate pricing for the slivers of land. These slivers of land are not by themselves buildable lots but would be added onto the adjacent residential parcels. [The City] doesn't need the land and doing this would keep Public Works from having to mow and maintain those parcels. He added that a utility easement would be retained because there are existing water and sewer lines in there. Mr. Roberts is suggesting two pricing options:

1. Price the slivers at 25¢ per square foot – this results in the prices being \$1,559.50; \$382.00; \$1,862.25; and \$5,401.25. This is a fair option because the person getting the largest parcel pays the most. The amount per square foot was chosen to keep the highest price somewhat reasonable.
2. Flat price of \$1,500 per parcel – the parcels vary widely in size, so any formula based on area results in one person paying very little and another paying a lot. This makes it even for each of the four owners, and it avoids trying to pin down what is a “fair” value per square foot.

Councilmember Coffey stated that he doesn't believe that either of these options are fair to those people who have already bought parcels of land using the standard 75¢ per square foot pricing. He said if it's supposed to be \$5,000, that's what they need to pay. Mr. Roberts responded that he did not include that standard pricing in this because the larger parcel would end up costing around \$20,000, which he doesn't feel is worth it because it's not a buildable lot. Councilmember Webb noted that that lot is almost a half-acre that is fairly flat, and Councilmember Coffey added that from what he understands, Mrs. Wheeler wants to build on the lot. Mr. Roberts replied that Mrs. Wheeler has expressed interest in building a guest cottage, but the current zoning there doesn't allow that, so, if she did want to do that, it would have to go through the Planning Commission and City Council for approval.

After some further discussion, Council rejected both pricing options as presented, and it was decided to offer the parcels for sale at the standard 75¢ per square foot.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Sarah M. Burch, Clerk of Council

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Tyson T. Cooper, Mayor