

**CITY OF NORTHWEST
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2022
7:00 PM**

ASSEMBLY

The Northwest City Council held their regular meeting on Tuesday, April 26, 2022 at 7:00 PM, at Northwest City Hall, 4889 Vernon Road.

Present: James Knox, Mayor; Councilmen: Charles Carroll, Michael Troy, Sylvester Ballard, and Councilwomen Sheila Grady and Alexis Clemmons

Also present: Donna Strickland, City Clerk

CALL TO ORDER & INVOCATION

Mayor Knox called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Councilman Michael Troy gave the invocation.

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilman Charles Carroll **MOVED, SECONDED** by Councilman Sylvester Ballard to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- **Dr. Gene Smith – Brunswick Community College President**

BCC has been Ranked #1 in the Nation two years in a row according to SmartAsset

Councilwoman Sheila Grady stated that it has been a pleasure for her to work with Dr. Smith and the College has excelled under his leadership, and it is a pleasure to have him attend the Council meeting.

Dr. Smith stated that it was a pleasure to come to the City of Northwest and speak about the programs that are offered at BCC. Dr. Smith stated that a graduate of a Brunswick County School can attend the College 100% free. He also stated that once a student takes the required courses and has a 3.0 GPA average, they are automatically accepted into UNCW.

Below is a list of some of the Trades that BCC Offers:

1. Plumbing
2. HVAC
3. Electrical
4. Welding
5. Carpentry

Brenda Ballard Brown – 4281 Stillys Avenue

Mrs. Brown stated that she has been trying to get help with the dilapidated house on the property next to hers for years. She stated that the house is invested with snakes and is a danger to her. Mrs. Brown would like to know what Council can do to help.

Mayor Knox stated that the Company NFocus contracts to provide code enforcement services for government agencies. He stated that the firm would be able to work with the City in dealing with this situation.

Councilman Charles Carroll **MOVED, SECONDED** by Councilwoman Sheila Grady to hire the firm NFocus to provide code enforcement services to the City of Northwest in dealing having the dilapidate structure removed, and overgrown property mowed at 4281 Stillys Avenue. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

A. Budget Meetings

- May 3, 2022 – 6:00 PM Budget Workshop FY 2022-2023 budget

Councilman Charles Carroll **MOVED, SECONDED** by Councilwoman Alexis Clemmons to hold a Budget Workshop on May 3, 2022, at 6:00 PM located at City Hall. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

- May 24, 2022 – 7:00 PM or shortly thereafter City Council holds public hearing on the FY 2022-2023 budget

Councilwoman Sheila Grady **MOVED, SECONDED** by Councilman Charles Carroll to hold a public hearing on FY 2022-2023 budget on May 24, 2022, at 7:00 PM or shortly thereafter located at City Hall. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

- May 24, 2022 – 7:00 PM or shortly thereafter City Council adopts the FY 2022-2023 budget

Councilman Sylvester Ballard **MOVED, SECONDED** by Councilwoman Alexis Clemmons to adopt the FY 2022-2023 budget after the public hearing on May 24, 2022, at 7:00 PM or shortly thereafter located at City Hall. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.

B. Economic Development Group

Councilman Sylvester Ballard stated that he and Councilwoman Sheila Grady had come to City Hall to review the Blueprint Brunswick County information and discussed the need to organize Northwest Economic Development Group.

C. Updates

- Phone System

City Clerk, Donna Strickland, stated that the new phones are in, and the new system is planned to be online April 28, 2022.

- GPS System

City Clerk, Donna Strickland, stated that we are in the final stages of implementation on the GPS System. The next step is to schedule a time to install the devices on the vehicles. Mrs. Strickland stated that as soon as this date is scheduled, she will update Council.

- RMS Software System

City Clerk, Donna Strickland, stated that the Records Management System

Software for the Police Department has been loaded on the City's server. The training dates for implementation of the software will be scheduled for the first week of May.

- 1% Prepared Food Tax

City Clerk, Donna Strickland, stated that to bring additional funding into the City of Northwest, there is a prepared meals tax that is allowed in North Carolina. She also stated that the tax is 1% and is imposed upon meals that are prepared at restaurants. Mrs. Strickland stated that the tax is only imposed by local jurisdictions upon the granting of approval by the North Carolina General Assembly.

Councilwoman Alexis Clemmons **MOVED, SECONDED** by Councilman Sylvester Ballard to move forward with the proper steps to impose the 1% prepared food tax. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

LIAISON REPORTS

Administration & Human Resources

Mayor Knox

Nothing additional.

Annexation, Marketing, Planning, IT

Councilwoman Clemmons

Councilwoman Alexis Clemmons stated that signs will be ordered to go at each entrance to the City. A directional sign will be placed at the end of Northwest Road and Mount Misery.

Park Equipment, Buildings & Grounds

Councilman Ballard

Councilman Sylvester Ballard reported that Phase I of the Park renovation has begun. He stated that the walking path on the back and sides of the softball field has been removed. He also stated that he received five(5) different quotes on removing the trees and they ranged from \$35,000 to \$75,000, which is way outside of the City budget. So, he did speak to a person who said they would cut down the trees at no cost to the City. The only thing the City would have to do is remove the stumps.

Councilman Charles Carroll stated that he would have the stumps removed at no cost to the City.

Police

Councilman Troy

Councilman Michael Troy **MOVED, SECONDED** by Councilman Charles Carroll to go into closed session at 8:48 PM to discuss Police personnel. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Councilman Charles Carroll **MOVED, SECONDED** by Councilwoman Alexis Clemmons to return from closed session at 9:00 PM. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

****Police Report****

Councilman Charles Carroll **MOVED, SECONDED** by Councilwoman Sheila Grady to accept the Police Report as presented. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

****Cemetery Report****

Mayor Knox stated that he wanted to thank Interim Chief Perez for a job well done in relation to the arrest made on the double homicide case.

Interim Police Chief Perez stated that there have been anywhere from 70 to 90 special checks done and the Cemeteries in Northwest are being patrolled daily.

Roads

Councilman Carroll

Councilman Charles Carroll stated that he has gotten good responses for the work that has been done on the roads. He also stated that Mr. Earnest Fields has been doing a great job on keeping a check on the roads.

Finance & Emergency Management, Recreation & Grants

Councilwoman Grady

****Founders Day***

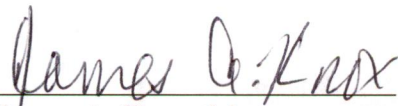
Councilwoman Sheila Grady stated that the plans for the 1st Annual Founders Day Celebration are underway. She invited anyone to the next Founders Day planning meeting on May 2nd.

City Clerk, Donna Strickland stated that the Fire Department has not requested a rate increase due to an increase in revenue directly relating to the growth.

Mayor Knox stated that he had been contacted by the African American Heritage Foundation of Southeaster, NC to donate \$500. The African American Heritage Foundation of Southeaster NC is an organization founded in 2004 by local citizens dedicated to tell the African American story within North Carolina and in its great context within America's history. The AAHFSNC is working with the Leland Cultural Arts Center to bring the "Bunce Island Exhibit" to Leland Cultural Arts Center. The general public is invited to tour the free exhibit from 11am to 3pm on June 18, 2022. The traveling, exhibit tells the story of Bunce Island in Sierra Leone, its connection to the Atlantic slave trade, its historic relationship to the regions of mainland North America.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Charles Carroll **MOVED, SECONDED** by Councilman Sylvester Ballard to adjourn at 9:07 PM. The **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**.


James A. Knox, Mayor


Donna Strickland, City Clerk/Finance Officer