

5th Street/Avon Street CAC

Meeting Minutes

March 18, 2021

Present: CAC members James Cathro, Mary Katherine King, Craig Roller, Karen Davenport, David Storm, Roger Schickedantz, Robert Finley, Glen Michael, Diane Greider, Shawn Brydge; county supervisors Donna Price and Liz Palmer; planning commission members Rick Randolph and Karen Firehock, county staff members Tori Kanellopoulos, Carolyn Shaffer, and Abbey Stumpf, Nelsie Birch, county staff, and Trevor Henry, county staff. In addition, there were 9 members from community.

Meeting called to order at 7:01pm.

Disclosure read-Meeting being held pursuant to and in compliance with Ordinance No. 20-A(16), an ordinance to ensure continuity of government during Covid19 disaster. Also information provided for community members to join.

February meeting minutes and revised January meeting minutes both approved.

Supervisors Donna Price and Liz Palmer conducted a town hall for the upcoming county budget.

Donna provided update from recent board meeting on use of form based code, which is a zoning code that will deal with already developed areas. It will need to include housing policy, including affordable housing, and zoning ordinances. The board decided to send both the housing policy and form based code back to county planning.

The county is still trying to get guidance on home federal monies from the CARES Act and recently passed American Recovery Act. There are currently no rules on how the funds should be used or timelines to be used. The county budget is not dependent on these funds.

Liz provided presentation on fiscal year 2022 budget, totaling \$466,071,084. Property tax rate remained at \$0.854 per \$100 of assessed value. The budget includes \$15.4 million to city as directed by city/county revenue sharing agreement. County budget heavily dependent on real property taxes. Compared to previous year, taxes are up for residential, SNAP applications, and residential development permits. Areas that are down compared to previous year are commercial assessment values and tourism/hotel occupancy. From the CARES Act, the county will direct \$9million to general government, \$1million to technology, \$3.6million to human services, and \$5.3million to economic development.

The budget is broken down into several broad categories: emergency needs, workforce stabilization, strategic priorities, health care premium and revenue growth, strategic use of funds (one time use of funds), and adjust capital transfer. Included in the 2022 budget is increase of minimum wage to \$15 per hour. The county is also now staffing North Garden fire department w/ paid county personnel for weekday daytime hours and adding an ambulance company in North Garden.

Strategic investments will include establishing an Office of Broadband Services. Will initially consist of two employees and department will report to county executive. Initial cost is \$536,376. Other strategic investments include onetime payments of: \$350,000 for a broadband project, \$43,750 for regional

transit planning, \$600,000 contribution to existing fund for affordable housing, and \$600,000 for climate action. Capital investments include schools, transportation (including getting VDOT matching), economic development, parks and trails, courts, and public safety. The county add 22 emergency personnel last year. First three year, the positions are funded through grants. After that, will be county expense.

Questions from CAC members and community attendees.

What ~~is~~-are causes of growth in the budget over past several years? Related to county growth. Large growth in emergency services, county services needed to keep up with growth.

What is current debt and what is future capacity for debt? County has capacity for \$10million in debt and still maintains AAA rating. Debt cannot be more than 2% of property revenues.

What is the breakdown of federal monies in the county budget? Some funds are constant from various agencies and some are from recent stimulus packages passed over past year.

Will current position openings that have been frozen be filled going forward? County will review each position to determine need. There will ~~be~~ continue to be a need for emergency personnel. Fewer volunteers coming into fire and rescue system. This is a national trend, but last year county had 150 individuals complete training.

Supervisor Updates

Donna stated county reviewing need to increase community development fees. No increase in past ten years. March meeting ~~have~~ was focused primarily on the budget.

Next CAC meeting will be Thursday April 15, 2021 at 7pm, by zoom meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:21pm