

HUNTSVILLE CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
Regular Meeting - February 10, 2022 - 5:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, Municipal Building
Huntsville, Alabama

Members Present: Mr. John Meredith, President
Dr. Jennie Robinson
Mr. Bill Kling
Mr. Devyn Keith
Ms. Frances Akridge

Mayor: Mr. Tommy Battle
City Administrator: Mr. John Hamilton
City Attorney: Mr. Trey Riley

President Meredith called the meeting to order at the time and place noted above.

Ragab Abdelmoneim, Imam with the Huntsville Islamic Center, led the invocation; Councilmember Akridge led the of Pledge of Allegiance.

President Meredith stated the next item on the agenda was Approval of the Agenda.

President Meredith stated he would like to add to the agenda, as item 7.b, a presentation from the Solid Waste Disposal Authority, providing an update on the status of the Recycling Alliance of North Alabama's collection of household recyclables.

President Meredith asked if there were any other changes to the agenda.

Councilmember Kling moved to approve the agenda, with the change stated, which motion was duly seconded by Councilmember Akridge and unanimously approved.

President Meredith stated the next item on the agenda was Approval of

Minutes.

The minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Council on January 27, 2022, were approved as submitted.

President Meredith stated the next item on the agenda was Mayor: Special Recognitions.

President Meredith recognized Mayor Battle.

Mayor Battle asked Kenny Anderson, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, to come forward.

Mayor Battle stated that on the prior Monday, in the department head meeting, they had the first of their talks about Black History Month, and at this time they had a proclamation concerning Black History Month.

Mayor Battle asked Mr. Anderson to do the presentation of the proclamation.

Mr. Anderson read from the proclamation as follows: "Whereas, Dr. Carter G. Woodson, considered to be the father of Black History, and the president of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, established the second week in February Negro History Week in 1926; and

"Whereas, February was chosen primarily because the second week of the month coincides with the birthdays of both Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, a former slave who was prominent in the abolitionist movement to end slavery; and

"Whereas, President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month in conjunction with the nation's bicentennial celebration in 1976, challenging America to seize the opportunity to honor the too often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history; and

"Whereas, the United States Congress passed "National Black History Month" into law in 1986, with the goal of bringing awareness to the ongoing efforts of Blacks for freedom, justice, and equality; and

"Whereas, the theme for Black History Month 2022 is Black Health and Wellness, focusing on the contributions and breakthroughs of Black professionals, as well as speaking to the cultural richness of those 'non-traditional' health and wellness practitioners, e.g., doulas, midwives, etc.; and

"Whereas, the city of Huntsville is home to three Historically Black Colleges & Universities, Alabama A&M University, Oakwood University, and Drake State Community & Technical College, graduating students who excel in all fields, including medicine, STEM, and social services; and

"Whereas, the city of Huntsville has a rich legacy of Black business owners, educators, public servants, community leaders, athletes, civil rights pioneers, and more;

"Now, therefore, be it resolved that Tommy Battle, Mayor of Huntsville, Alabama, does hereby proclaim the month of February, in the year 2022, as Black History Month and encourages residents to join in the celebration of the vast accomplishments and contributions of Black people to American and world history."

Mayor Battle thanked Mr. Anderson for the presentation and for the job his department did every day.

Mayor Battle stated they had an Employee Incentive Award to present at this time, and he asked Mr. Byron Thomas, Director of Human Resources, and Mr. Brian Walker, Director of Landscape Management, to come to the podium.

Mr. Walker stated that at this time they would like to recognize Lonnie Cawthorn, who worked with Landscape Management.

Mr. Walker presented a plaque to Mr. Cawthorn, stating they wanted to thank him for coming over to Landscape Management from the Police Department in November of 2020, noting that since he had come to the Department, he had led a group of temporaries to pick up the litter on the sides of the roads, dealing with

illegal dumps, homeless camps, and everything else. He stated that during the pandemic, they had a very hard time getting temporary labor, and a lot of times Mr. Cawthorn had gone out by himself, and he had never complained and still accomplished the goal.

Mr. Walker stated to Mr. Cawthorn they were so thankful for his service and what he did for Landscape Management.

Mayor Battle thanked Mr. Cawthorn, noting that people would come down the roads and look on the sides of the roads and see how clean they were. He stated that numerous people had asked how he kept the city so clean, and he stated it was because of people like Mr. Cawthorn, and he thanked him for all the work he did.

President Meredith stated the Council had a special recognition, honoring Mr. Lee Jones for his years of service on the Huntsville Public Library Board.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Robinson for the presentation.

Councilmember Robinson stated that in addition to honoring people who got paid to work for the City, they also wanted to honor people who did a lot of work for the City but did not get paid, noting they called these people "volunteers." She stated one of those volunteers was retiring from that service. She stated that Lee Jones had served for 12 years on the Library board, and before that he had been very active with Friends of the Library, as well as with LearningQUEST. She stated that during Mr. Jones' time on the Library board, they had built three new libraries: the Madison Library, the North Huntsville Library, and the South Huntsville Library. She stated that Mr. Jones was leaving his term of service as president of the Library board.

Councilmember Robinson thanked Mr. Jones and thanked his family for supporting him for many years, and she thanked him for his work with the staff at the library. She stated they wanted to thank him for his many hours of dedication and his passion for libraries, and they wished him well.

Councilmember Robinson presented a certificate to Mr. Jones honoring his service.

Mr. Jones stated that the Huntsville Public Library was a wonderful system, and he stated if persons did not know it, they should get down there and get to know it. He stated there were a lot of good people down there who would help persons find anything they wanted to find.

Councilmember Kling read and introduced a resolution honoring the life of James O. Bearden, Sr., and his servant leadership to the Huntsville community, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-73)

Councilmember Kling moved for approval of the foregoing resolution, which motion was duly seconded by Councilmember Robinson and unanimously adopted.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Kling for the presentation.

Councilmember Kling stated it was a privilege for him to take a few minutes to recognize this outstanding citizen in the community and the loss that would be felt. He stated they were so fortunate in Huntsville to have stalwarts like Mr. Bearden.

Councilmember Kling stated he would like to read a few excerpts from the resolution, and he read as follows: "Whereas, the City Council and Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama, express great sorrow at the passing of James Otha Bearden, Sr., former Community Watch volunteer and faithful member of Lakeside Methodist Church, on the 27th day of December, 2021, and would like to recognize and honor him for his remarkable achievements, dedication, and service to the Huntsville community; and ...

"Whereas, recognizing February is Black History Month, it seems only fitting to honor one of our citizens, as he was the first African American to serve on the IBM Board of Directors, during a time when IBM made incredible contributions to the

NASA program. IBM provided the computing power to navigate the Saturn rockets to the moon. During Mr. Bearden's twenty-five years with IBM, he consistently arrived thirty minutes early for work and received the most prestigious award, named 'The IBM Means Service Award'; and ...

"Whereas, the community at large also benefitted from Mr. Bearden's desire to serve, and he infused in his family that 'Service is Sovereign.' He was a founding member of the Fraternal Club, Masonic #6; worked on the Ad Hoc Committee to establish the Land Trust of Monte Sano; participated as a Deputy Voting Registrar; served on the Board of Directors for Habitat for Humanity; and was a member of the Board of Directors of Huntsville Emergency Medical Services; and ...

"Whereas, despite his numerous public accolades, it was his family that he inspired the most. He doted on his wife of 66 years, Georgia Ruth, and instilled the importance of love and family to his numerous nieces and nephews. Mr. Bearden was described as a good man, a kind man.

"Now, therefore, be it resolved that the City Council and Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama, express their greatest sympathy on the passing of James Otha Bearden, Sr., to his family, loved ones, friends, and acquaintances, and hereby recognize his service to his fellow man and his contributions as a public servant to our community."

Councilmember Kling stated this was adopted and was being presented on the 10th day of February, 2022. He stated it was his privilege to make this presentation and to also let it be known that the resolution the Council had just unanimously passed would be permanently in the minutes of the City Council, for history to remember.

Mayor Battle stated that James Bearden had been on the HEMSI board with him, and he was somebody who was a leader, that when he talked, people listened,

that he was a great person and a great contributor and worked very hard for many years on the HEMSI board, for the entire community.

Councilmember Kling presented the resolution to Mrs. Bearden.

Mrs. Bearden stated she was standing there as a broken-hearted widow, for her husband of 66 years. She stated she was Georgia Bearden, widow of the late James O. Bearden, Sr., and she stated to Mayor Battle, Council President John Meredith, and the remaining members that she was humbled and forever grateful to accept this honorary resolution on her husband's behalf. She offered her profound thanks to Councilmember Kling for sponsoring this resolution, and she stated to him that his fingerprints were all over her home, that he probably had forgotten, but back in 1995, his signature was on their honorary resolution, when former Mayor Steve Hettinger had honored all the pioneers of the civil rights movement, on the 30th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act. She stated that she thanked God for Councilmember Kling being a good man.

Mrs. Bearden stated that former Councilman Will Culver had introduced the resolution, noting that they could always count on him, that he was a people's councilman, along with the late Richard Showers.

Mrs. Bearden stated she would also like to thank President John Meredith, who had provided exclusive leadership of the Council. She stated to Mr. Meredith that she thanked God for him, and she stated she could not stand there during Black History Month without celebrating President Meredith's father, James Meredith, a civil rights icon, the first African American to enroll and graduate from the University of Mississippi. She stated those of her generation knew what a sacrifice that was, that they all had a front-row seat during that era.

Mrs. Bearden stated she always remembered the beauty of the people who had helped them along the way.

President Meredith thanked Mrs. Bearden for her kind words.

President Meredith stated the next item on the agenda was Announcements and Presentations.

President Meredith stated that at this time there would be a presentation from the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library, providing an update on new services and online options for the public.

Ms. Cindy Hewitt, Executive Director, Huntsville-Madison County Public Library, stated it was an honor to appear before the Council and to present what they were doing at the library, noting they just wanted to provide an update. She stated they were so grateful to the City of Huntsville for their ongoing support of the library system, noting it was one of the best systems in the state, so they should feel proud of what they did to support the community with the library.

Ms. Hewitt stated that at this time she would show a brief video of the services they offered, just to give them an update. She stated the North Huntsville Library was coming up on its one-year anniversary, and they were about to hit the six-month mark with the South Huntsville Library. She stated they were very excited about this growth and prosperity, noting there was a lot going on in the library system.

(Video played.)

(Ms. Hewitt made a PowerPoint presentation.)

Ms. Hewitt stated she would like to show a few statistics of what they had been doing. She stated that when COVID hit, and they were dealing with closures and openings and limited access to the library, they had added a lot of digital services and online services to make the library accessible. She stated that starting in March of 2020, they had added the Hoopla service, which gave people instant downloads. She stated this had 1.1 million books, audio books, television, and film, a lot of non-fictional educational materials, things that would help the community to grow.

She stated they had also added Kanopy, which had a variety of resources available as well, over 27,000 films and documentaries, and unlimited kids films as well. She stated that their OverDrive collection, which they had always had in place, had more than 15,000 books, audio books as well, a combination of best sellers and new releases. She stated these were there to provide services outside the physical limitations of their buildings and had been well accessed.

Ms. Hewitt stated that as they could see on the display, they were up to 210,000 downloads just in the prior year, so they were definitely hitting the folks outside of just the physical buildings they occupied.

Ms. Hewitt stated the video had mentioned music, and she wanted to focus on that, noting this was really highlighting local musicians. She stated they had just added this in the prior year. She stated the first two months, they had more than 5,000 streams of people tuning in to their musicians.

Ms. Hewitt stated they had just opened a second round of submissions, trying to add 50 new artists per year. She continued that they were partnering with the new amphitheater that would be coming in, to highlight those artists in some of their performances, noting they felt like that was a good community partnership helping to highlight local music.

Ms. Hewitt stated what she was displaying at this time was a number she wanted to share. She stated everyone knew how Huntsville liked to be No. 1, and she stated they had been No. 1 in library usage in the state of Alabama for the last eight years.

Ms. Hewitt stated that people in Huntsville loved their library, that they used it well. She stated it was well worth the investment the City put into the infrastructure and the resources they had, and they were really grateful that the City supported the library.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Akridge.

Councilmember Akridge asked if Ms. Hewitt could please put in a pitch for the Foundation and/or other ways to financially support the library, from individuals.

President Meredith stated he believed that would be appropriate.

Councilmember Akridge stated she did not want Ms. Hewitt to lose this opportunity to remind people that individual contributions mattered.

Ms. Hewitt stated she believed Councilmember Akridge had just said that for her, and she appreciated that.

Councilmember Akridge asked if she had a percentage of what this was of their budget.

Ms. Hewitt stated they did a lot of partnering with the community to raise money to help to continue to support the outreach programs to the community and to help raise money for materials and other resources they provided. She stated the Huntsville Library Foundation actually did many campaigns for them, and they would be doing a new one, a "Love Your Library" campaign, in February. She stated this was one they did every February, and it would contribute toward one of their building campaigns, as well as provide materials for the community.

Ms. Hewitt stated that persons could go to their website, hmcpl.org, and there was a link there if persons would like to give to the library and support it in that way.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Kling.

Councilmember Kling stated he would like to give a big shout-out to the library, noting they allowed community organizations access, including allowing him to have his monthly sessions for the public in Meeting Room A there, and he stated this was very much appreciated. He stated people seemed to like it because it was away from City Hall, and they felt like it was more of a neutral environment.

Councilmember Kling stated to Ms. Hewitt that was a wonderful thing they

provided, and he thanked her for what they did for him, as well as what they did for all the organizations.

Ms. Hewitt stated that meeting space was at a premium in the community, and that was something they offered.

President Meredith stated the next item on the agenda was a presentation from the Solid Waste Disposal Authority, providing an update on the status of the Recycling Alliance of North Alabama's collection of household recyclables.

Mr. Doc Holladay, Executive Director of the Solid Waste Disposal Authority, appeared before the Council, and he stated that on behalf of the Authority, he would like to thank the City for their efforts in helping them get back on schedule. He stated they certainly appreciated the assistance.

Mr. Holladay stated that on a typical day, they picked up around 40 tons of recyclables, but on the prior Friday, Saturday, and part of Sunday, they had collected 436 tons of recyclables countywide. He stated all those recyclables were transloaded and sent to Chattanooga for recycling, that they were not put in a pit, they were not burned, that they had shipped them to Chattanooga, just like they did with all other recyclables.

Mr. Holladay thanked the Sanitation Department and the Public Works Department, noting they had 15 trucks that had assisted them, and on Friday, they had another nine, and on Saturday, he thought every supervisor in the department worked those two days, to get them back on schedule. He stated the reason some of the volumes were higher was because it was right after Christmas, and some people had not had a pickup since Christmas, so there was all that recycling.

Mr. Holladay stated that what had stood out with him was the dedication and the work ethic and professionalism of the City's Sanitation crews and the supervisors, noting they had done a phenomenal job.

Mr. Holladay stated he would again like to thank the Mayor, the Council, Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Riley, Mr. McNeese, and Mr. Scott for all their hard work in helping to get them back on schedule. He stated they were still running a little behind, that people had been patient with them, and some had not realized they had been missed on previous collections, so they were having to address more misses than usual, but they were trying to get to those people, noting they would have crews working over the weekend to try to get those misses caught up, and to also be on a more regular schedule.

President Meredith stated the next item on the agenda was Public Hearings to be Set.

Councilmember Robinson read and introduced a resolution to set a public hearing on the zoning of 36.57 acres of land lying north of University Drive and west of Wayne Road to Highway Business C-4 District and Residence 2 District, at the March 24, 2022, Regular Council Meeting, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-74)

Councilmember Robinson moved for approval of the foregoing resolution, which motion was duly seconded by Councilmember Kling and unanimously adopted.

Councilmember Robinson read and introduced Ordinance No. 22-75, zoning 36.57 acres of land lying north of University Drive and west of Wayne Road to Highway Business C-4 District and Residence 2 District.

Councilmember Robinson read and introduced a resolution to set a public hearing on the zoning of 3.58 acres of land lying on the south side of Cap Adkins Road and east of Norton Road to Residence 1 District, at the March 24, 2022, Regular Council Meeting, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-76)

Councilmember Robinson moved for approval of the foregoing resolution,

which motion was duly seconded by President Meredith and was unanimously adopted.

Councilmember Robinson read and introduced Ordinance No. 22-77, zoning 3.58 acres of land lying on the south side of Cap Adkins Road and east of Norton Road to Residence 1 District.

Councilmember Robinson read and introduced a resolution to set a public hearing on the zoning of 2.22 acres of land lying on the south side of Old Hwy 20 and east of Greenbrier Pkwy to Commercial Industrial Park District, at the March 24, 2022, Regular Council Meeting, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-78)

Councilmember Robinson moved for approval of the foregoing resolution, which motion was duly seconded by Councilmember Kling and was unanimously adopted.

Councilmember Robinson read and introduced Ordinance No. 22-79, zoning 2.22 acres of land lying on the south side of Old Hwy 20 and east of Greenbrier Pkwy to Commercial Industrial Park District.

Councilmember Robinson read and introduced a resolution to set a public hearing on the vacation of a right-of-way along McMullen Lane, at the March 10, 2022, Regular Council Meeting, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-80)

Councilmember Robinson moved for approval of the foregoing resolution, which motion was duly seconded by Councilmember Kling and unanimously adopted.

Councilmember Robinson read and introduced Resolution No. 22-81, consenting to the vacation of a right-of-way along McMullen Lane.

Councilmember Robinson read and introduced Ordinance No. 22-82, vacating a right-of-way along McMullen Lane.

President Meredith stated the next item on the agenda was Agenda Related Public Comments.

President Meredith stated this portion of the meeting was reserved for persons wishing to address the Council on matters relating to the specific content of items on the meeting agenda. He stated that persons could sign up to speak on the Public Comments Roster prior to the meeting. He asked that when called, persons approach a microphone and state their name, home address, and city of residence. He stated that each speaker could address the Council for three minutes, and speakers shall refrain from entering into dialogue with Council members or City staff and from making comments regarding the good name and character of any individual.

Mr. Rod Montgomery addressed the Council, stating he was a resident of the city of Huntsville, and his address was correct on the roster, and having signed up to speak concerning "Item 21 Annexing Property."

President Meredith stated that concluded public comments for agenda-related items.

President Meredith stated the next item on the agenda was Mayor Comments.

President Meredith recognized Mayor Battle.

Mayor Battle stated, concerning COVID, that if persons had watched the numbers on Monday, they saw there were 249 patients in Huntsville Hospital's health system, and he stated that at this time that number had dropped to 206, that they were seeing what the nation was seeing, a decline in numbers. He stated that did not mean they were all the way out of the pandemic, but it meant they were starting to move in the right direction. He thanked everyone for all their hard work on this, especially those in the healthcare system who had worked day in and day out, the nurses, doctors, emergency crews, and the support personnel who had worked at each of the hospitals. He thanked them for their hard work, stating it had been

almost two years of the pandemic that persons had to endure, and the health personnel had to endure much more than any other person ever thought about. He thanked them for the work they did and for keeping the community a safe community.

Mayor Battle stated that since Valentine's was coming up, Huntsville Animal Services was inviting the public to find love with a furry companion, as part of their week-long celebration. He stated they had just done Ground Dog Day, to determine what the weather would be, and at this time they were trying to adopt out animals, using Valentine's as one of their tools.

Mayor Battle stated one of the worst reports he had gotten was when he first became Mayor, and they brought in about 10,000 animals and adopted out only about 2500, that the other 7500 were put to death. He stated that at this time, they had a 95 percent rate of returning animals back into the community, or back into other communities. He stated they were doing a great job on that, that they had put in spay and neuter programs that made a difference and made them have fewer animals coming in. He thanked the Animal Control group and the Animal Control Advisory groups for the work they had done, noting they had made them a more humane community.

President Meredith stated the next item on the agenda was Councilmember Comments.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Robinson.

Councilmember Robinson commended the Administration for their commitment to delivering service to citizens, noting that the problem-solving, the collaboration, and the creative thinking that had gone into working with the recycling program to help them get caught up was so characteristic of the work they did as a city.

Councilmember Robinson stated the South Huntsville Neighbors magazine had come out earlier in the week, and it featured Women in Policing, and on the cover there was Officer Alexicia Pennington from the South Precinct; Sgt. Rosalind White, the Police Department Public Information Officer; and Lt. Tesla Hughes, the Director of Training for the Police Department. She stated that Sgt. Yuliya Zaremba was also featured in the articles about women in policing. She continued that this was an exceptional issue about the history of women in policing, the contributions they made, and it was a great recruiting tool.

Councilmember Robinson stated they needed more women on their police force, that women represented one-half of the city's population, but just around 10 percent of the police force was female. She stated that Chief McMurray had said that was one of his primary recruiting goals, first to recruit more minority women, and then women as a whole. She stated they hoped those who had any interest in joining the police force would take a look at this magazine and see if it might encourage them to do so. She thanked Bob and Suzanne Druckman for a really exceptional issue.

Councilmember Robinson stated she had been watching the women's halfpipe in the Olympics, and the commentator had said, "Everyone celebrates the finish line, though we never celebrate the start." She stated this made her think that the Council had on the agenda for this meeting a contract to start the renovations on the inside of the Sandra Moon Complex, and she was really excited about that, so she wanted to celebrate that start. She stated they were looking forward to seeing that completed, noting that the Johnson Legacy Center had been a great inspiration, to let her see what was possible. She stated they were going to use that as their ideal and hope they could provide that kind of a community center that would really energize that area, noting that they had the library there, and this would take them to a whole new level.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Kling.

Councilmember Kling stated that during the prior two weeks, he had continued his mental, and perhaps physical, fitness process of walking around the neighborhoods of his district, looking for things to call in, to get attention to, such as cable TV wires, potholes, et cetera. He stated he believed this time was well spent.

Councilmember Kling stated he had mentioned his concern about traffic being backed up on Governors Drive due to carry-out traffic from one of the local coffee vendors. He continued that he had a very good conversation with a representative of the company, and they were aware of the situation here in Huntsville, and they had had contact with some of the people here, their corporate people, and their engineers, and they were looking for a way to resolve the problem. He stated he believed they would be seeing some good news coming out of this situation. He stated he believed everyone was aware that Governors Drive was one of the city's major arterials, and when it got backed up, especially during peak hours, it could potentially be a dangerous situation, when they would lose one of those three westbound lanes.

Councilmember Kling stated a gentleman had contacted him concerning short-term policies with Airbnbs in four city neighborhoods: Chaffee, Piedmont, Fleming Meadows, and Westbury Estates. He asked if someone could get in touch with Mr. McAdams, the representative of the Fleming-Westbury neighborhood, noting he had a telephone number for him if someone needed it. He stated this problem seemed to happen on weekends, when most of the City manpower was down.

Councilmember Kling stated that for Valentine's Day, he would be going out with some others, leaving from the Legacy Center on Jordan Lane, at about 1 o'clock on Monday, to pass out Valentine's candy at the senior citizen housing complexes, and other Council members were invited to attend.

Councilmember Kling stated that Councilmember Akridge had brought forth a

significant idea about traffic safety, and he believed they all cared about traffic safety and about cars that ran red lights. He stated Councilmember Akridge's idea was not the way the Council wanted to go on this, but he believed he and Councilmember Akridge had now embraced the idea of going with some sort of timing on traffic lights so there would be overlapping red lights. He stated that when he was getting his master's degree in planning, he had some course work in traffic flow, which he was aware was a very important thing, and they would try to balance that with what they could do and could not do, noting that safety was paramount, and doing what they could.

Councilmember Kling stated he believed there had been a little resistance from the traffic engineer concerning this idea, but there was a problem out there. He continued that the street he lived on fronted out onto Governors Drive, and they had had problems in the past with cars running the red light, so he was very sympathetic and in tune with what Councilmember Akridge had raised. He stated when he had raised that problem, he believed the ultimate resolution to resolve it was to hold the red light and not turn it green until there had been a little overlapping of red lights.

Councilmember Kling asked if they could get the traffic engineering folks to revisit this and look at the situation very carefully, noting this was something that could be valid. He stated he was aware they would want to make sure they would not get into a situation where cars would start intentionally running red lights.

Councilmember Kling stated they needed to find out what they could do concerning this matter. He stated he believed all of the Council members were in agreement that running a red light was something significant, and they should get some attention to this. He stated if red-red was not the solution, they needed to find out what the solution was because they needed to do something concerning this matter. He stated that where they had done this on Governors Drive, he believed that

had greatly improved cars running the red light.

Councilmember Kling stated he was not looking for a magical solution or a big debate concerning this matter, but he would ask if anyone else had any ideas to chime in on this, noting he believed they needed to get the traffic folks to look into this situation and see what could be done to improve it. He stated there had been an increase in traffic accidents over the last year.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Keith.

Councilmember Keith stated that on February 22nd, at 5:30, they would be discussing renovation to the potential Stoner Field and what would be the skate park, and persons were invited out to hear about this new, exciting development. He thanked everybody in Parks & Recreation for the work they had done on this, and he stated he looked forward to seeing everybody out there.

Councilmember Keith stated to Ms. Kelly Schrimsher, Director of Communication, that a number of persons had contacted him concerning how much they liked the blogs and the work they had put out during the month, noting that it had been impactful for many families.

Councilmember Keith thanked Mr. Davis for his good work on the Mapco situation. He stated that in his community, there was value of perspective. He continued that they could drive by and see Builders Square down, and that was exciting. He stated that Mapco was one of those things, a problem spot, to say the least, and he appreciated the work Mr. Davis had done on it.

Councilmember Keith stated he had a conversation with someone about Black History, and the question was really around the ramifications of him, as an African American, appreciating it, and he had told that person he had been living it for 33 years.

Councilmember Keith stated he was African American, but he had learned of a

Jewish/Polish immigrant who had affected this world, in New York, in Brooklyn, and although he had never had an effect on him, his community, or his circle, he appreciated the work he did. He stated one did not have to be Black to appreciate Black History Month. He continued that he was appreciative every time he looked in the mirror, as others should be for what they saw. He stated he was very thankful for the value of what it was to be an African American in this nation and in this city, and to sit on this Council. He stated he understood the magnification, to be around people who would exemplify that every single day.

Councilmember Keith stated that what he thought appreciation could be, through action, was understanding, that it did not have to be maybe just the perspective of wearing green on St. Patrick's Day or eating tacos on Cinco de Mayo. He stated people should take their time and get to know a community and culture through action, go somewhere they had never been before in the month of February, take their family to a community event outside their circle, around people they had never seen before and who did not look like them; go and have some good food, down at Betty Mae's, or grab the best cup of coffee in Huntsville, at a place he would not mention the name of.

Councilman Keith stated there were places and spaces where persons could sit around and experience, and immerse themselves in, this beautiful culture that was Huntsville, Alabama, and the African Americans who were in it. He stated people could call Multicultural Affairs, and Mr. Anderson could point them in a number of directions, and maybe, if regulations allowed it, they could go to a church, a place of worship they had never been, and hear some good gospel music.

Councilmember Keith stated that people could appreciate this month through action, not just gesture. He stated it was made to recognize those individuals who were American citizens just like them, no different, just recognizing that those who

were a minority in this nation had made an impact, just as much as the majority.

Councilmember Keith wished everyone a Happy Black History Month, and he stated he hoped they appreciated it, through action.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Akridge.

Councilmember Akridge thanked Councilmember Keith for the call to action, to get outside one's comfort zone and experience something new.

Councilmember Akridge stated she had visited neighbors in River Ridge, which was located way down at the bottom of Big Cove, and not only was it a warm reception, but it was a multi-racial community. She stated she was thrilled, that she knew the statistics of her district, but to see it in living color, having different races there, in the beautiful neighborhood of River Ridge, was quite satisfying. She stated she had shared a booklet there, an update from District 2, which anyone could call the office, at 256-427-5011, and get a copy of. She stated that some of the news in this booklet related to the entire city.

Councilmember Akridge stated that someone had called her attention to a post on "Next Door," where a neighbor of Hermitage was very concerned about the prospect of a new phase of the subdivision that was zoned years ago. She stated she wanted to advise these neighbors that they would meet with the developer to find out what rules they were going by. She stated they knew there would be some kind of subdivision there, and they would find out before the March 22nd public hearing how they would manage the stormwater, which she noted was the biggest concern. She stated some people had mentioned traffic, and that would be addressed more fully at the public hearing on March 22nd.

Councilmember Akridge stated that the neighbors on Hermitage would get another note from her to meet with the developer, noting this would not be an open meeting, that it was just for the people within 500 feet of that parcel.

Councilmember Akridge stated she had a town hall meeting scheduled for March 9th, about traffic safety. She stated that in that town hall, they could discuss Councilmember Kling's statistics, noting this was something she had looked into, and she stated one of the reporters had mentioned there had been some resistance to that. She stated there were some things that even related to pedestrians, making sure pedestrians could get out into the crosswalk and be seen before the lights turned green. She continued that there were some tweaks that perhaps they could do. She stated the purpose of the town hall was to know more about the role of Traffic Engineering and the Police Department, and how they worked together to improve safety.

Councilmember Akridge stated they would learn more about their role, and they would invite people to make requests about safety and to have suggestions about how to improve safety, particularly at intersections, where 7,300 accidents had occurred just last year.

Councilmember Akridge invited everyone to join her on the following Monday, Valentine's Day, at 1 p.m. for the Dog Walk, a special trail in the Botanical Garden specifically for dogs. She stated she had two tickets she would give away to someone, that they could just call her office.

Councilmember Akridge stated she had been out harvesting sticks for a new exhibit called "Stickwork," which would open in March. She stated it was very interesting to find a little piece of forest that actually needed to be thinned, and the saplings, the sticks, that were flexible could go to this temporary art installation. She stated that Patrick Dougherty and his son were building it at this time. She stated they did 10 of these a year within the United States, so they were very lucky to be able to have this in the city.

President Meredith stated he had intended to talk about Black History Month,

but he would just ditto Councilmember Keith's remarks.

President Meredith thanked Athens State University for having him out to address their students and faculty, and also opening it up to the public, noting that he really appreciated that opportunity, and he hoped everyone had a good time and learned a little. He also thanked the folks at the University of Alabama Huntsville who had allowed him to address their student athletes, and he stated that hopefully they had learned something.

President Meredith stated he also wanted to thank Mr. Marcus Sims and the good folks over at WJAB 90.9 for allowing him to participate in a podcast.

President Meredith stated he wanted to recognize the Sanitation Department, Mr. Redonald Scott and Mr. Chris McNeese, and every single one of the folks who got out there and helped to get caught up on the recycling. He stated they had gone above and beyond, that they had given up weekends and time with their families, and he wanted them to know that the community really appreciated their dedication to getting that done.

President Meredith stated he wanted to let the folks out in Cobblestone, as well as Lake Forest/Magnolia Village, know their outreach and communication to him about issues in those communities had been received, and he had done preliminary work with the Lake Forest/Magnolia Village issue, and hopefully they would see some of that improvement when they went home that evening.

President Meredith stated the next item on the agenda was Finance Committee Report.

Councilmember Keith read and introduced a resolution authorizing expenditures for payment, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-83)

Councilmember Keith moved for approval of the foregoing resolution, which

motion was duly seconded by Councilmember Robinson and unanimously adopted.

President Meredith asked Councilmember Keith if he had a report from the Finance Committee or if there were any other announcements he would like to make.

Councilmember Keith replied in the negative.

President Meredith stated the next item on the agenda was Board Appointments to be Voted On.

Councilmember Robinson read and introduced a resolution appointing Jim Flinn to the Special Care Facilities Financing Authority of the City of Huntsville-Redstone Village, to fill a vacancy due to the resignation of Henry Oldham, for the remainder of his term, to expire November 13, 2023, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-84)

Councilmember Robinson moved for approval of the foregoing resolution, which motion was duly seconded by Councilmember Kling and unanimously adopted.

President Meredith stated the next item on the agenda was Board Appointment Nominations.

President Meredith stated that Councilmember Akridge and Councilmember Kling had nominated Acacia Moore for appointment to the Beautification Board, Place 5, to fill a vacancy due to the passing of Cynthia Masucci, for the remainder of a vacant 3-year term to expire September 30, 2024.

President Meredith asked if there were any further board nominations.

There was no response.

President Meredith stated the next item on the agenda was Unfinished Business Items for Action.

Councilmember Robinson moved for approval of Ordinance No. 22-69, declaring certain equipment surplus and to be sold at public auction, which ordinance was introduced at the January 27, 2022, Regular Council Meeting, as follows:

(ORDINANCE NO. 22-69)

Said motion was duly seconded by President Meredith.

President Meredith asked for an explanation of the above ordinance.

Mayor Battle stated these were routine items, and he stated he believed this referred to snowflake decorations. He asked Mr. Ricky Wilkinson, Director of General Services, if that was correct.

Mr. Wilkinson replied in the affirmative, stating that these were various items from the General Services yard on Washington Street, and they were no longer useful for City use, and they were taking them to be sold at public auction. He stated they were undergoing an initiative to upgrade their snowflakes to LED, so these were outdated.

Mayor Battle stated there were also 14 bicycles and two stainless steel sinks.

President Meredith called for the vote on Ordinance No. 22-69, and it was unanimously adopted.

Councilmember Robinson moved for approval of Ordinance No. 22-70, amending Section 8-195, Action against business license and certificate, and Section 8-272, Vehicles for hire rates, which ordinance was introduced at the January 27, 2022, Regular Council Meeting, as follows:

(ORDINANCE NO. No. 22-70)

Said motion was duly seconded by Councilmember Kling.

President Meredith recognized Ms. Quisha Bryant, Director of Parking and Public Transit.

Ms. Bryant stated the ordinance before the Council would make two amendments to the vehicles for hire ordinance. She stated the first would be that the operators would be required to have a chauffeur's license if they were going to drive a vehicle for hire, so they had added language that if anyone was operating a vehicle for

hire without a chauffeur's license, there would be the ability to take action against their business license as a result of their not following the ordinance which requires said license. She stated the second amendment to the ordinance was to increase the maximum rate drivers could charge their fares. She stated that at this time, they could charge \$3.50 for the first one-half mile, and they would increase that to \$5; and for the miles following, they could currently charge \$2, and they would increase that to \$2.50. She stated that, additionally, there was a waiting charge the vehicles for hire could charge, if the vehicle was not in motion and they were waiting for their fare, and currently that was \$20, and they would increase that to \$25.

President Meredith asked if there was any discussion.

President Meredith called for the vote on Ordinance No. 22-70, and it was unanimously adopted.

Councilmember Robinson moved for approval of Ordinance No. 22-71, amending Ordinance No. 89-79, to raise the minimum hiring rate for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Supervisor position, which ordinance was introduced at the January 27, 2022, Regular Council Meeting, as follows:

ORDINANCE NO. 22-71)

Said motion was duly seconded by President Meredith.

President Meredith recognized Mr. Byron Thomas, Director of Human Resources.

Mr. Thomas stated that this ordinance was basically amending the minimum hiring step for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Supervisor position. He stated this was consistent with other actions that had been done, based on the apprenticeship program for recruitment and retention.

President Meredith asked if there was any discussion.

President Meredith called for the vote on Ordinance No. 22-71, and it was

unanimously adopted.

Councilmember Robinson moved for approval of Ordinance No. 22-72, amending Section 2-1422 of Division 7 of Article VIII, of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Huntsville, to add place numbers to the Burritt Memorial Committee, which ordinance was introduced at the January 27, 2022, Regular Council Meeting, as follows:

(ORDINANCE NO. 22-72)

Said motion was duly seconded by Councilmember Kling.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Kling.

Councilmember Kling asked for an explanation of the rationale for this action.

President Meredith recognized Mr. Hamilton.

Mr. Hamilton stated this was obviously a Council action, and it was one their staff had led the effort on, in collaboration with the Communication Department, in looking across all the boards and commissions in the City and looking at some of the administrative aspects they had to manage to ensure they were appointing people in a timely manner, and they understood the positions they were appointed to. He stated there were a number of boards where not having the places identified made it a challenging administrative process, to ensure they were getting people into the right places. He stated there had been a number of these already, that they were working their way through the list, noting that there were a lot of boards and commissions.

Mr. Hamilton stated there were really two pieces of this on this agenda, that assuming the Council approved this ordinance assigning the place numbers, there was a resolution later on the agenda assigning the current members, by name, to the place numbers, so they would know exactly when their terms expired or when they were due to be reappointed, et cetera.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Robinson.

Councilmember Robinson stated that their staff had done an incredible job cleaning up the entire boards and commissions process. She stated there were approximately 60 boards and commissions to which they made appointments, and this would make it easier for the staff to track the appointments. She commended the staff for their work on this, noting it had been a tremendous effort.

Mr. Hamilton stated, just to be clear, that this would in no way change the current terms of the members, that it would just give a label to their position so it would be easier to keep track of their terms.

President Meredith called for the vote on Ordinance No. 22-72, and it was unanimously adopted.

President Meredith stated the next item on the agenda was New Business Items for Consideration or Action.

President Meredith asked if any of the Council members would like to hold any items from the consolidation.

After discussion, President Meredith stated items 20.f, 20.h, 20.i, 20.j, and 20.o would be held from the consolidation.

Councilmember Robinson moved for consolidation and adoption of the following items, which motion was duly seconded by Councilmember Kling and unanimously approved:

Resolution authorizing the acceptance of donations, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-85)

Resolution authorizing the Mayor to terminate the Pest Control Services contract award extended to Spray's Termite Control & Insulations, Inc., pursuant to Resolution No. 21-960, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-86)

Resolution authorizing travel expenses, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-87)

Ordinance amending Budget Ordinance No. 21-867 by changing appropriated funding for various departments and funds, as follows:

(ORDINANCE NO. 22-88)

Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into agreements with the low bidders meeting specifications as outlined in the attached Summary of Bids for Acceptance, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-89)

Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement between the City of Huntsville and Mobile Communications of America, Inc., DBA Sharp Communications & Security Solutions, for Professional and Technical Services for Consulting, Installation, Repair, Maintenance, and Support Services for the City's Communication Systems, Security Systems, and Networks, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-91)

Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement between the City of Huntsville, Alabama and Legal Services of Alabama, to support the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-95)

Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute Modification No. 2 to the agreement between the City of Huntsville, Alabama and Huntsville Assistance Program, for the use of Emergency Rental Assistance Program funds, as adopted and approved by Resolution No. 21-196, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-96)

Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into a Special Employee Agreement between the City of Huntsville and Kimberly Erb, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-97)

Resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute Change Order No. 1 to the agreement between the City of Huntsville and Chorba Contracting Corporation, for construction services for the Animal Services Renovation Phase 3, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-98)

Resolution assigning members of the Burritt Memorial Committee to numbered places, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-100)

Resolution to adjust the salaries of employees in certain positions in assigned department, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-101)

Resolution authorizing the Mayor to apply for and execute an FY 2022-2023 EPA Air Grant, in an amount up to \$200,000 in federal funding, to support the City's Air Pollution Control Program, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-102)

Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement between the City of Huntsville and Regroup Mass Notification, for group notification services, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-103)

Resolution authorizing the City Attorney to settle the case of Auto Owners Insurance Company v. Austin W. Michael, et al., as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-104)

Resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into, on behalf of the City of Huntsville, an Amended and Restated Addendum to Contract for Utilities, and to execute same, between the City of Huntsville, Huntsville Utilities, and Starbelt, LLC, in connection with a Project Development Agreement heretofore entered into between said parties and The Industrial Development Board of the City of Huntsville,

as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-105)

Resolution authorizing the mayor to enter into a Cooperative Service Agreement between the City of Huntsville and the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Wildlife Services (WAS), as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-106)

President Meredith stated the Council would now consider the items held from the consolidation.

Councilmember Robinson read and introduced a resolution authorizing a portion of the proceeds of certain future borrowings to reimburse the 1990 Capital Projects Fund of the City for expenditures incurred prior to borrowing issuance, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-90)

Councilmember Robinson moved for approval of the foregoing resolution, which motion was duly seconded by Councilmember Kling.

President Meredith recognized Ms. Penny Smith, Director of Finance.

Ms. Smith stated the resolution before the Council at this time was what was called a "reimbursement resolution." She stated this was a tool they used when they looked forward, looking to basically the next issuance. She stated they looked at what they were going to issue debt for, the projects contained in this fund they would reimburse for. She stated this allowed them to move forward with those projects, and then they could reimburse themselves for the cost they had incurred up until they actually issued the borrowing.

Ms. Smith stated these were already-budgeted projects that were laid out in the 1990 Capital Projects Fund, and they had also budgeted debt, accordingly, with

that. She stated these were planned borrowings, that they planned to do in the future.

Ms. Smith stated this was just another tool in their toolbox. She stated that, in particular, they were looking at the renovations, the next phase, of the Sandra Moon Complex, which was also on the agenda; the Huntsville Public Safety Training Center; and the fire station out west. She stated they were looking toward those, as well as a few other things. She stated this allowed them to not borrow too soon, or to borrow too much or too little, as they looked toward that borrowing. She stated this saved the citizens money because they were not borrowing up front and paying interest on that money as they moved through. She stated this allowed them to utilize the liquidity the City had in their Cash Reserves.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Robinson.

Councilmember Robinson asked if the total amount of the borrow was \$45 million.

Ms. Smith stated the total amount of the borrow was at this time pegged at \$45 million, but that might fluctuate up or down, that this gave them a little bit of leeway. She stated it did not have to be that exact amount, but that was what their estimate was at this time.

Councilmember Robinson stated she felt it was important for them to recognize that the City did an incredible job of managing debt, and that was why they had a AAA bond rating. She stated this was a very thoughtful process, and she thanked Ms. Smith and everyone who was working with her to manage the debt.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Akridge.

Councilmember Akridge stated she would like to summarize this, noting that it was a way to both save money and to expedite some projects so they could get started.

Ms. Smith stated was correct.

Councilmember Akridge stated the citizens of Huntsville would greatly appreciate both of those objectives.

Councilmember Akridge stated to Ms. Smith that her name was in the South Huntsville magazine as one of the protectors, the financial protector, of the City, and they wanted to thank her.

President Meredith asked if there was any further discussion.

President Meredith called for the vote on Resolution No. 22-90, and it was unanimously adopted.

Councilmember Robinson read and introduced a resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement with the State of Alabama Department of Transportation for Federal Aid Rail/Highway Crossing Improvement, Project No. RHPD-RR21(920), Agreement for Maintenance of Passive Warning Devices, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-92)

Councilmember Robinson moved for approval of the foregoing resolution, which motion was duly seconded by President Meredith.

President Meredith recognized Mr. Shane Davis, Director of Urban and Economic Development.

Mr. Davis stated this was a Federal Aid program to improve railroad crossings within the state. He stated the Oakwood Avenue crossing, just east of Meridian Street and just west of the I-565 interchange, was scheduled for improvements. He stated this was a 90/10 match, that the program would pick up 90 percent and the locals would have to pick up 10 percent, because some of it would be done in their public right-of-way. He stated the estimated cost for the entire project was just under \$39,000, and the City's match would be \$3,863.70.

Mr. Davis stated this would be paid out of their budgeted annual

Traffic Maintenance For Signs and Markings. He stated what would happen at the intersection would be that new markings would go on the pavement, new signage, and for the crossing that was there, the lights and the arms would be upgraded to the new standard, that they would be all LED, so they could be much better seen in the daylight hours. He stated they wanted to bring this up to the new federal standards, and the City was seeking their approval for the 10 percent participation.

President Meredith stated he had rarely seen a 90/10 match, so the fact that Mr. Davis had found one was very commendable.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Akridge.

Councilmember Akridge stated the reason she had held this item was not because she was worried about it, noting that they needed to do it, and the money was not the issue. She stated there were documents on this particular item that dated back to March of 2021, so she would like to know why this had come back, noting that it looked like the Council had already approved it. She asked, also, if something could be done to convince the railroad to put the type of horn that went in only one direction rather than all the way around.

Mr. Davis asked if Councilmember Akridge was talking about on the car engine.

Councilmember Akridge replied in the affirmative, noting they could signal they were coming, and it would go only in the direction of the streets they crossed, not the entire universe.

Mr. Davis stated he would not be able to help Councilmember Akridge on that.

Councilmember Akridge stated she had been asked about this three years prior.

Mr. Davis stated they were multi-directional for a reason, because of the different intersections they would cross. He stated that was a federal standard.

Mr. Davis stated they were approached in 2021, and that was one of the letters attached to this document, through the City, to see if they were interested in participating in this program, and they had said they were, and at this time Norfolk Southern and the Alabama Department of Transportation, their Rail Division, had finished the plan and had actually gotten the price, so at this time they knew what their match was, and that was what the Council would be approving.

Councilmember Akridge asked if it was like a letter of intent.

Mr. Davis replied in the affirmative.

Councilmember Robinson stated that if she could clarify, the resolution was that the Council would authorize the City to enter into the agreement, and what was before the Council at this time was the agreement.

President Meredith asked if there was any further discussion.

President Meredith called for the vote on Resolution No. 22-92, and it was unanimously adopted.

Councilmember Robinson read and introduced a resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Huntsville, Alabama and The Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama, for and on behalf of the University of Alabama in Huntsville, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-93)

Councilmember Robinson moved for approval of the foregoing resolution, which motion was duly seconded by President Meredith.

President Meredith recognized Mr. Chris McNeese, Director of Public Works.

Mr. McNeese stated this was a partnership between the City of Huntsville and UAH for a demolition project on Executive Plaza, for the City to go in and remove certain structures designated by UAH.

Councilmember Keith inquired as to the location.

Mr. McNeese stated it was Executive Plaza, at the corner of Sparkman and University.

Councilmember Akridge stated UAH had purchased this property about three or four years ago, and they had plans for new student housing, as well as retail, et cetera.

Councilmember Akridge asked why UAH was not hiring a private contractor rather than asking the City to do it.

Mr. Hamilton stated this was another opportunity for the City to partner with other public entities in the community, that there were a number of other things they were doing. He stated they had done this sort of thing with the Housing Authority, as well as other public entities, the school system, et cetera. He stated UAH had explored a private contractor, and it was substantially more expensive, that, in fact, UAH was paying the City to do this. He stated that Mr. McNeese and his staff had gone through a thorough estimating process, and this was a good price for the City to do it, so it would bring resources from them back into the City, which resources could be used for public purposes, as opposed to it going to a private entity. He stated that the City was also able to execute on a timeline that better fit UAH's overall economic development strategy, so it was a good partnership for the City.

Mr. Hamilton stated this was not inconsistent with other things they had done such as this, with other public entities, or, in some cases, even where the Council would have approved a development agreement with a private entity and part of their contribution toward that partnership was work in-kind by Public Works or WPC or some other City department. He stated it was consistent with that sort of thing.

Mr. Hamilton stated that, ultimately, they would be saving the taxpayers of Alabama some money that would help fund that public university, including the one in Huntsville, and it would also get resources back into the City that they would be

able to use to fund operations in Public Works.

Mr. Hamilton stated there had been some questions about the work flow within Public Works, and he stated they would not be bringing this before the Council if they did not have the capacity to do it, as well as they would not work in partnership with the Housing Authority if they did not have the capacity to do it.

Mr. Hamilton stated there were three divisions within the Public Works Department: Sanitation, which everyone was very familiar with; the Maintenance Division, which did things such as pothole repairs, cleaning out ditches, and those sorts of things; and the Construction Division, which did a lot of different things.

Mr. Hamilton stated this type of thing was one of the things the Construction Division did, and it was the reason they had equipped and manned this division the way they had, so they would be prepared to partner with this public university in what would really be an economic development project. He stated this would be bringing in not only amenities, et cetera, for the students, but it would also bring in things that would generate sales taxes and other things like that.

Mr. Hamilton stated they believed this would be a good partnership, so they were recommending approval so Public Works could assist them and get this project moving forward.

Mayor Battle stated that the University Drive corridor was very important for them, noting that approximately 40 percent of the City's sales tax came off of that area. He stated this would just develop a little bit farther down, noting that when they added MidCity, it had brought development all the way down to almost Wynn Drive, and this would take it from Wynn down to Sparkman, and then it would go all the way out past Providence. He stated this was a retail and growth corridor, and there would be some living amenities in there for students, and students spent a lot of money in the city. He stated it made a lot of sense for the City to be able to have

some say as to what would be built.

Mayor Battle stated they were also working with Drake State at this time on helping them on some projects they had, that Mr. McNeese had been out there during the week talking with them.

Councilmember Keith stated he believed they should do more of these public-private partnerships because of what the Mayor had just said, having a say on the impact to the City. He stated that a lot of times, entities thought about the inclusivity on their own, that the Board of Trustees were not even living in the city, and he would not call any colleges out, but they would make decisions about what happened on their acreage, when, impactfully, it should reverberate out, especially in places like Northwest Huntsville and places like West Huntsville. He stated he thought one of the greatest examples they had seen as to what was about to happen was Oakwood, who had partnered with the City, and the City had run water, sewer, and they had put up lights, and Oakwood had brought a clinic and a grocery store, and they were at this time doing another development. He stated Oakwood was a great example of having inclusivity in public-private partnerships, and their administration gave a good example of asking for input, what the City thought was best.

Councilmember Keith stated he thought this was a great example of something the City should be doing more of, so they could make sure the things the colleges were building would be built to last, and also to give some consideration to the people outside the university.

Mr. McNeese asked people to please not think this would take away from the obligations Public Works had for the citizens, that they were still going to provide maintenance, they were still going to resurface streets, and they were still going to clean gutters, to clean out ditches, and do the other maintenance obligations they had

always done. He stated he had a wonderful staff, that they had Sanitation, Maintenance, and Construction, and Maintenance was staffed at this time to continue the obligations they had from day to day.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Kling.

Councilmember Kling stated he liked it when they looked at things, and this looked like it had been evaluated and the maintenance areas were not going to be negatively impacted. He stated he also liked it when governing bodies could work together, cooperate, and he thought this could be a win-win, that the City would pick up some revenue, and, as he understood it, the revenue would actually go into an account for Public Works, so that would stay in that department and not be diluted in the General Fund. He stated he liked it when they could help a great university in the community with cooperation.

President Meredith asked if there was any further discussion.

Councilmember Akridge thanked Mr. Hamilton and Mr. McNeese for the reassurance that it was a different division, the Construction Division, because maintenance, especially storm water system maintenance, was something that was a pain point for a lot of citizens in District 2, living at the base of the mountain and having people very close to her submit requests that needed to be addressed. She stated if in the future they could slide some people from Construction over to Maintenance from time to time, she thought that would help, and she knew the citizens would be very grateful. She stated she had asked about it because she needed reassurance it was not going to take away from Maintenance because that was an ongoing issue.

Mr. McNeese asked that they please know this was not their primary task, for the partnerships, that they also helped other departments. He continued that Construction supported not only other departments, but they supported the other

two divisions within Public Works. He stated that this week they had been helping the Traffic Department with some tasks, and they helped Economic Development a lot. He stated they did a lot more than just the demolition they were discussing at this time.

President Meredith asked if there was any further discussion.

President Meredith called for the vote on Resolution No. 22-93, and it was unanimously adopted.

Councilmember Robinson read and introduced a resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement between the City of Huntsville and Crisis Services of North Alabama, Inc., as a sub-recipient to use grant funds from the U.S. Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance Program, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-94)

Councilmember Robinson moved for approval of the foregoing resolution, which motion was duly seconded by President Meredith.

President Meredith recognized Mr. Scott Erwin, Manager of Community Development.

Mr. Erwin stated that items 20.j, 20.k, and 20.l on the agenda were sort of a combination. He stated if they would recall back to the prior February, he had appeared before the Council and asked them to consider organizations that could help them administer the distribution of the U.S. Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance Funding, which was ERA 1. He stated that process had been concluded, all the funds had been expended, and the contracts had expired on December 31st.

Mr. Erwin stated they were happy with these organizations' performance during that process, and this was the second round of funding, Emergency Rental Assistance 2, and the City was receiving \$4.7 million. He stated these organizations would assist in the distribution of that funding through the end of the year.

President Meredith asked if there was any discussion.

President Meredith called for the vote on Resolution No. 22-94, and it was unanimously adopted.

Councilmember Robinson read and introduced a resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement between the City of Huntsville and Consolidated Construction Company, for construction services for the Sandra Moon Community Center Phase 2, as follows:

(RESOLUTION NO. 22-99)

Councilmember Robinson moved for approval of the foregoing resolution, which motion was duly seconded by President Meredith.

President Meredith recognized Mr. Ricky Wilkinson, Director of General Services.

Mr. Wilkinson stated this was a construction services agreement for the Phase 2 project for the Sandra Moon Community Center. He stated this was the renovation of approximately 110,000 square feet. He stated the primary work would include life-safety upgrades, to include a fire sprinkler and a new fire alarm, and improvements to ADA, accessibility, as well as necessary building code upgrades. He stated this would also finish out the rehearsal space and offices for Arts Huntsville. He stated that the amount of the contract was \$4,373,000.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Robinson.

Councilmember Robinson stated this was a project that had gone into multiple phases, with the first phase being to cut the building in half and just get the outside of the shell contained. She stated this would now make it possible for further phases to go on, and they would get the life-safety pieces done, and that would then prepare them for the third phase, when the actual renovation on the inside would be done.

Councilmember Robinson stated they had at least 10 performing arts groups

who were very eager to get into that building, and once the life-safety was done, the first renovation was going to be the office space, so that Arts Huntsville could begin to move those groups in there. She stated they should be pleased to know that piece had priority for them.

Councilmember Robinson asked Mr. Wilkinson if he could tell them a little about what was going to happen in the next phases.

Mr. Wilkinson stated the theater was already sprinkled, and it was really close, but there was some scope of work that would need to occur within the theater in order to get that usable. He stated that in addition to that, the old kitchen and cafetorium would be renovated, with new finishes, in a future phase, as well, with LED lighting, what they would really expect in order to get that space usable. He stated this phase would just get the foundation done for future phases in those areas.

Councilmember Robinson asked if it was correct, then, that the offices would be done.

Mr. Wilkinson replied in the affirmative.

Councilmember Robinson stated it was a 300-day contract, so they were looking at approximately 10 months to get everybody into those offices, noting that they really wanted to do that.

Mr. Wilkinson stated that was correct.

President Meredith asked if there was any further discussion.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Akridge.

Councilmember Akridge asked who was choosing these groups.

Councilmember Robinson stated Mr. Hamilton had been working with Allison Dillon-Jauken of Arts Huntsville on this. She stated that some of the groups who had expressed an interest in this were Community Chorus and the Huntsville Brass Band.

Mr. Hamilton stated that from the City's perspective, they really had two

tenants, that Parks & Recreation had a portion of the building, which they had already been using for youth sports and other community events, and Arts Huntsville would manage the space that was dedicated to the arts, noting this would be organizations within the community that were partnered through Arts Huntsville. He stated that they did not anticipate bringing before the Council a list of organizations, and they would pick the winners and losers, that they would let Arts Huntsville do that.

Councilmember Robinson stated those groups, in particular, the Brass Band, Huntsville Community Chorus, and the Huntsville Youth Orchestra, had actually been giving input to the architects regarding the space they were going to be using.

Mr. Hamilton stated they had had good collaboration, and that Allison Dillon-Jauken had led that effort, managing and representing the arts community, and had brought in people as necessary, to make sure the architects had the input they needed.

President Meredith asked if there was any further discussion.

President Meredith called for the vote on Resolution No. 22-99, and it was unanimously adopted.

President Meredith stated the next item on the agenda was New Business Items for Introduction.

President Meredith read and introduced Ordinance No. 22-107, annexing 320.00 acres of land lying on the south side of Huntsville Brownsferry Road and west of Mooresville Road.

President Meredith stated that concluded the business portion of the meeting.

President Meredith stated the next item on the agenda was Second Roster Public Comments.

President Meredith stated this portion of the meeting was reserved for persons wishing to address the Council on matters relating to City business, whether

or not such items were on the meeting agenda. He stated that persons could sign up to speak on the Second Public Comments Roster prior to or during the meeting. He asked that when called, persons approach a microphone and state their name, home address, and city of residence. He stated that each speaker could address the Council for three minutes, and that speakers shall refrain from entering into a dialogue with Council members or City staff and from making comments regarding the good name and character of any individual.

Dr. Chris Brown, 103 Highwood Court, addressed the Council, having signed up to speak concerning "HPCAC."

President Meredith interrupted Dr. Brown, stating he would respectfully ask him not to use the word "lying," basically disparaging someone by calling them a liar.

Dr. Brown continued to address the Council.

Ms. Sarah Colletti, Squaw Valley Drive, addressed the Council, having signed up to speak concerning "RIP Deborah Fletcher."

President Meredith interrupted Ms. Colletti, stating her remarks were concerning something that had happened outside the city of Huntsville, and the Council had no power to do anything concerning something that had happened in another jurisdiction. He stated Ms. Colletti should strike that from her comments and talk about things that actually pertained to Huntsville. He stated if Ms. Colletti continued with the remarks in the same vein, they would cut the microphone.

Ms. Colletti continued to address the Council.

President Meredith again interrupted Ms. Colletti, stating that the Council would move on to the next speaker.

Ms. Jan Neighbors, 7856 Walsingham Road, addressed the Council, having signed up to speak concerning "Angel of Hope" (HAPC).

President Meredith stated that concluded the Second Roster Public Comments.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Kling.

Councilmember Kling stated that Ms. Neighbors had contacted him, and she had sent him a photograph of the statue, and it looked like it would be a very tasteful addition for Big Spring Park, and he would suggest they get copies of this to everyone, the Mayor, the Council, and the staff, and they could look into this.

Councilmember Robinson stated she had also been working with Ms. Neighbors on this, at Ditto Landing, and they had recently had a conversation about trying to find a more centrally located place. She stated she would appreciate it if Mr. Hamilton could have a conversation with Ms. Neighbors, considering Big Spring Park or some other location in the city where they might provide a place of solitude but that would still be centrally located.

Mr. Hamilton stated he would work with Ms. Neighbors on a suitable place, noting it might not be Big Spring Park but another place central to the city.

President Meredith recognized Councilmember Keith.

Councilmember Keith stated, speaking for himself, that the Council would not interfere with any City's perspective, as to how they handled an investigation or how they handled their police department because he would not dare hear from another council member or another mayor about how he would run his position as a City Councilman or how this body, which was elected, ran this city. He stated the perspective that they should give input, or opinion, about another city would then inversely mean they would be open to input and opinions from other cities. He continued that he could not, in his position, and not speaking for other Council members, ever believe he could be as arrogant, politically, to have perspective as to the intricacies of other cities' departments and their positions, and, overall, understand the intricacies of their community, which had elected them and not him.

Councilmember Keith stated his heart went out to the family for any loss,

anywhere, but the Council spoke on the things they could absolutely affect, and they heard opinions that correlated to the impact of the city.

Councilmember Keith stated he was frustrated at that time, and he was frustrated at this time, because he did not want to supersede that there should be accountability.

Councilmember Keith stated he was publicly saying at this time that he would absolutely meet with the Administration, and he would ask that they would come and give perspective on the Pugh case, that he would sit down with the Police Department to get a deeper dive into what he could have missed in the Pugh process, in understanding the totality of the investigation.

Councilmember Keith stated he wanted to be very clear, as Devyn Keith, a citizen born in Huntsville Hospital and now blessed to be in this position as a City Council member, that he would never dare to overstep his district, his city, his colleagues, to give input to another city that was handling a process that persons might disagree with. He stated they should not speak from this elected body that said "Huntsville" and not "Madison."

Councilmember Keith stated he wanted to be very clear that they could mourn, noting they had even hosted an event at the Richard Showers Center to discuss the perspectives of another city, the accountability of a police department of another city. He stated they had hosted this in his district because the outcry of care and concern for African Americans and their involvement with the police was high, and it had great gratitude to those perspectives everywhere because they understood it had gravity and affected people from a spiritual view and a personal view, that it was woven inside the community, but they should not in this professional setting ever speak against, for, or about another governing body because he would not hear, listen, or respect someone governing him from another city.

Councilmember Keith asked Mr. Hamilton if he could give a brief background as to the investigation process, and, also, as he was committing, if he could open the process to understand how he would like to go into the process of gaining more information about the Bradley Pugh incident.

Mr. Hamilton thanked Councilmember Keith for the opportunity to answer this question because the way the process was explained by the speaker was not at all accurate, that it was wholly inaccurate in terms of describing how the process actually worked. He stated the process had changed, from lessons learned, from incidents that had occurred a few years ago. He stated the way the process was managed in 2018 was different from the way it was at this time, based on lessons learned from those things. He stated constituents would often ask why something had not changed, but lots of things had changed, and one of them included the agreement the Council had approved a few months prior with the State Bureau of Investigation. He stated the idea that the review of any incident within the Police Department was solely looked at by the Chief of Police and he was the sole decision-maker was just absolutely false.

Mr. Hamilton stated there were really two different processes that were in place, and, obviously, the examples that were discussed at this time were police officer involved shootings. He stated there were two reviews, which were separate and distinct from each other, and one was an administrative review that Chief McMurray, as the department head for that department, would do, just like any other department head would do with anything that occurred in their department, looking at did the employees follow policy, did they follow their training, were there issues with their equipment, all the aspects of the incident, and they dealt with that administratively. He stated that had little to do with the criminal review process that was first investigated by the State Bureau of Investigation, reviewed by the

District Attorney, and, ultimately, they were the authorities that dictated the manner in which that was dealt with on that side, so the idea that it went through the chain of command with the Police Department was just completely false. He stated that a big part of what had changed was the timing of that.

Mr. Hamilton stated that in the past, several years ago, oftentimes the administrative process would get ahead of that review by the District Attorney, but they no longer allowed that to occur, to make sure that process, which went through the State Bureau of Investigation, and ultimately to the District Attorney, who would have the actual authority over these matters, stayed ahead of that administrative review. He stated they did not have to be in a hurry for the administrative review, that they could allow that to pause if something else on the other side of that needed to move forward, but ultimately they were the authority.

Mr. Hamilton stated, concerning the suggestion that they ought to delegate that authority to the HPCAC, that the HPCAC had a very specific list of duties the Council provided them in the ordinance, that they were private citizens who did a great job, that they were not professional law enforcement investigators and they were not district attorneys, that they did not have, nor would they ever have, the authority that was suggested the Council should delegate to them.

Mr. Hamilton stated the Council did not have that authority, and they could not delegate authority they did not have. He stated that was resident within the judicial system, which was not a city council and was not a private board of citizens, that it was, in fact, the district attorney, and judges, and on up. He stated that occurred completely separate from the administrative review.

Mr. Hamilton stated that in that administrative review, in fact, members of HPCAC sat in on that presentation, as did the City's Legal Department, as did members of the District Attorney's staff, so the idea that the only person looking at

this was Chief McMurray and/or his subordinate leaders was wholly false, and that it had essentially always been false, so that even with the changes he had talked about in the last couple of years, predating that, there had always been members of the HPCAC, under its old construct and under its construct at this time, that were a part of that process and part of that review process.

Mr. Hamilton stated that the Bradley Pugh case was brought up, and it was a good example, amongst the ones they had had, where those people who actually had nexus to him had the opportunity to review that incident with the police, that, in fact, representatives of his family had sat down with the Police Department, in Internal Affairs, and they were able to see the video that was relevant to that incident. He continued that the actual authority over that, in terms of the review, or what some citizens had called for, had occurred through the District Attorney's office.

Mr. Hamilton stated if Councilmember Keith or others wanted to get more familiar with that particular case, that was certainly something Internal Affairs could sit down with them and go through, but that had already occurred with a family member, with the understanding that in many of these cases, the definition of "next of kin" was not what many people oftentimes thought it was. He stated that was something that was private to that family, and their legal team did a very good job of making sure they had appropriately protected the rights of the family, the rights of those involved in the incident, and certainly making sure they were supporting them in whatever legal processes they might have.

Mr. Hamilton stated he understood that a number of times they had people come in and kind of lodge accusations that had not occurred, but they were not correct, that they did not have nexus to the case, and therefore were not privy to the knowledge of what really had happened in that particular case. He stated they would certainly be happy to set up a time to sit down with the Council members and go

through that if they so wished.

Councilmember Keith stated he had been called everything, from "Uncle Tom" to "enabler" and the list would go on, but none of that bothered him, that what bothered him, and why he was giving the opportunity to Mr. Hamilton and the Police Department, was if persons came down to the Council meeting to give accountability to anybody who was elected. He stated that was their job, as citizens, in his opinion, to give a perspective to what they wanted to see, and, inherently, those persons should do the same thing for their Police Department. He stated that although he would pray they would never have to have an interaction with them, they should expect if the police had interaction with anybody who was not from this city or of this city, that it would be of a professional level with which they could be comfortable.

Councilmember Keith stated that, also, they should be very aware that the Council, as elected officials, must remain objective, that the second they spewed subjective views that were counterproductive to the policy changes that were necessary for accountability, inherently, they would be sitting there as demagogues, living in a city they believed should be run by themselves. He stated they must give account to all of the citizens; and how they operated within the forms of that, inside the department, and through policy changes and considerations as a whole, that was why they must have a vote as a majority.

Councilmember Keith stated one person would not change the city, that the governing body must work together, with input from all sectors. He stated they would thank persons for coming to the Council meetings, that they enjoyed the accountability they wanted to give to them, but they were very aware that it would be in the ramifications, in his opinion, of the City of Huntsville, and no further.

Upon motion, the meeting was adjourned.

PRESIDENT OF THE CITY COUNCIL

ATTEST:

CITY CLERK-TREASURER

(Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m. on February 10, 2022.)