

**FAYETTEVILLE CITY COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION MINUTES  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL  
JANUARY 6, 2025  
2:00 P.M.**

Present: Mayor Mitch Colvin

Council Members Katherine K. Jensen (District 1) (arrived at 4:35 p.m.); Malik Davis (District 2); Mario Benavente (District 3) (arrived at 2:10 p.m.); D. J. Haire (District 4); Lynne Greene (District 5); Derrick Thompson (District 6); Brenda McNair (District 7); Courtney Banks-McLaughlin (District 8); Deno Hondros (District 9)

Others Present: Douglas Hewett, City Manager  
Lachelle Pulliam, City Attorney  
Kelly Olivera, Assistant City Manager  
Adam Lindsay, Assistant City Manager  
Jeff Yates, Assistant City Manager  
Jodi Phelps, Assistant City Manager  
Kimberle Braden, Police Chief  
Kevin Dove, Fire Chief  
Michael Gibson, Parks, Recreation, and Maintenance Director  
Brook Redding, Special Projects Manager  
Jerry Clipp, Human Resource Development Director  
Jason Everage, Chief Building Official  
Loren Bymer, Marketing & Communications Director (via TEAMS)  
Will Deaton, Planning and Zoning Manager  
Craig Harmon, Senior Planner  
Sheila Thomas-Ambat, Public Services Director  
Brian McGill, Interim Assistant Public Services Director  
Moses Brown, Assistant City Attorney  
Joshua Hall, Police Attorney  
Erin Swinney, Police Attorney  
Kim Toon, Purchasing Manager  
Andrew Lagala, Airport Director  
Deonte Watson, Deputy Airport Director  
Pamela Megill, City Clerk  
Members of the Press

**1.0 CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Colvin called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

**2.0 INVOCATION**

The invocation was offered by Council Member Thompson.

**3.0 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by City Council.

**4.0 CITY MANAGER REPORT**

None.

**5.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Council Member Haire moved to approve the agenda.  
**SECOND:** Council Member Thompson  
**VOTE:** UNANIMOUS (8-0)

**6.0 OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

**6.01 State Action Plan 2025**

Ms. Jodi Phelps, Assistant City Manager, introduced this item and stated the City of Fayetteville engages with state lawmakers and government agencies to support policy and funding opportunities that align with Council's identified priorities and objectives. These efforts ensure the protection and preservation of essential community assets and resources, expansion of critical services and infrastructure supporting residents, and initiatives that allow the City to thrive. The City has prepared, with input from staff and Council, the State Action Plan for consideration and formal adoption. The adopted plan will communicate and coordinate state funding and legislative advocacy agenda priorities.

The City's state advocacy consultants, CheckMate Government Solutions, helps shape and define Fayetteville's priorities while facilitating communication and coordination at the state level among elected officials and agency representatives. The State Advocacy Agenda is developed annually because of input from staff and Council and closely aligned with interests and priorities of legislators and agencies.

With all input incorporated, the document will be formally adopted by Council and shared with state representatives during office visits and conversations.

Consensus of Council was to direct staff to move this item forward.

## **6.02 Federal Action Plan 2025**

Ms. Jodi Phelps, Assistant City Manager, introduced this item and introduced Ms. Leslie Mozingo and Mr. Ryan Murphy, lobbyists for Strategics LLC.

Mr. Ryan Murphy presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated the City of Fayetteville engages with the federal legislators and government agencies to support policy and funding opportunities that align with Council's identified priorities and objectives. These efforts ensure the protection and preservation of essential community assets and resources, expansion of critical services and infrastructure supporting residents, and initiatives that allow the City to thrive.

The City's federal lobbyist team, Strategics Consulting, helps shape and define Fayetteville's priorities while facilitating communication and coordination at the federal level among elected officials and agency representatives. The City has a long-standing and successful relationship with Strategics Consulting having won support for and secured federal funding and directed spending for a variety of projects and needs. The Federal Advocacy Agenda is developed annually as a result of input from staff and Council and closely aligned with interests and priorities of legislators and agencies. With all input incorporated, the document will be formally adopted by Council and shared with federal representatives during office visits and conversations with our congressmen and senators.

The City's federal advocacy goals include the following:

- Develop and pursue a Federal Advocacy Agenda unique to the City of Fayetteville leading to consistent, high-quality results.
- Identify and pursue federal investments to achieve the long-term goals of the City.
- Build and maintain regular communications with the Congressional delegation, federal agencies, Council, staff, residents, and stakeholders.

The proposed Federal Advocacy Agenda addresses those items the City will focus advocacy on in the year ahead supporting workforce growth and economic independence, advancing housing opportunity and community infrastructure, ensuring high-quality community-based

veteran and military supports, providing sufficient mental health and community safety resources to meet needs, all of which affect the quality of life for our residents.

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of Council was to direct staff to move this item forward.

#### **CLOSED SESSION**

**MOTION:** Council Member Thompson moved to go into a closed session for attorney-client privilege and economic development.

**SECOND:** Council Member Davis

**VOTE:** UNANIMOUS (9-0)

The regular session was recessed at 3:07 p.m. The regular session was reconvened at 4:28 p.m.

**MOTION:** Council Member Benavente moved to go into open session.

**SECOND:** Council Member Davis

**VOTE:** UNANIMOUS (10-0)

**MOTION:** Council Member Haire moved to table Items 6.03, 6.04, 6.05, and 6.06.

**SECOND:** Council Member McNair

**VOTE:** FAILED by a vote of 4 in favor to 6 in opposition (Mayor Colvin, Council Members Jensen, Benavente, Thompson, Banks-McLaughlin, and Hondros)

#### **6.03 Changes to Building Code Inspector Certifications by the North Carolina Code Officials Qualification Board**

Mr. Jason Everage, Chief Building Official, presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated effective January 1, 2025, the NCCOQB revised its rules for required qualifications for all levels of building, plumbing, mechanical, electrical and fire inspectors. The occupancy tables for level I, II, and III inspectors, that were previously used have been removed. The new standards limit Level I inspectors to only residential construction, Level II inspectors to commercial construction, and Level III inspectors are unlimited, across all trades.

Building code inspectors are currently assigned to specific zones of the City. This practice limits the amount of driving across the City and allows for the most efficient use of work hours. The changes could increase the amount of fuel used by inspection staff, and possibly decrease the number of inspections performed per day. Development Services staff will work with Budget Office staff to estimate the annual impact for Council's consideration during the FY26 annual budget process

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of Council was to receive the report.

#### **6.04 Makerspace Project Update**

Mr. Michael Gibson, Parks, Recreation, and Maintenance Director, presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated SFLA Architects have developed a concept master plan for a makerspace on City owned property located on the corner of Murchison/Rowan/Bragg. The concept master plan continues the development of a major gateway in the downtown corridor.

The next step is to evaluate and determine which elements of the project could be completed with the current available appropriated funding. Additionally, requesting proposals to explore potential partners for the management and operations of the proposed facility.

Makerspaces are communal public workshops in which individuals gather to share resources and knowledge, work on projects, network, and build.

Funding in the amount of \$800,000.00 was appropriated by City Council on November 8, 2021, for an initial phase of the project. Removal of underground storage tanks, roof replacement, interior demolition, and replacement of a security fence have been completed to prepare and secure the property.

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of Council was to direct staff to move this item forward.

#### **6.05 Introduction to Sentinel Event Review**

Mr. Moses Brown, Assistant City Attorney, presented this item with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation and stated On June 10, 2024, the City Council took action to develop and implement a sentinel event review process for selected events that occur within the City, to include officer-involved fatalities. In response, the City Attorney's Office has prepared an introduction to the process and is seeking feedback and further direction from the Council.

Discussion ensued.

Council Member Benavente put forward a motion to direct the City Attorney's Office to move this item forward to proceed with developing this concept, so we can engage with our partners. Council Member Banks-McLaughlin seconded the motion. The motion failed by a vote of 2 in favor to 8 in opposition (Mayor Colvin, Council Members Jensen, Davis, Haire, Greene, Thompson, McNair, and Banks-McLaughlin).

#### **6.06 A Proposed Ordinance to Prohibit Impeding Sidewalks**

Mr. Douglas Hewett, City Manager presented this item and stated the City's Code of Ordinances does not address pedestrian safety on streets and sidewalks other than to prohibit obstructions caused by construction debris, overgrowth, gasoline pumps, or merchandise soliciting, as examples. The Code does not address obstructions caused by people or other objects that impede travel on streets and sidewalks within the City limits. Council is requested to approve the ordinance amendment to close this gap.

Ms. Lachelle Pulliam, City Attorney stated a review of complaints about individuals and objects impeding/blocking sidewalks found that the City's Code of Ordinances does not include a prohibition against doing so. All public sidewalks must be accessible to all pedestrians, including people with mobility concerns. Other North Carolina municipalities have similar ordinances.

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of Council was to adopt the proposed ordinance as drafted at the next regular City Council meeting. Council Member Benavente was opposed to the Consensus vote.

#### **6.07 City Council Agenda Item Request - Red-Light Camera Program - Council Member Thompson**

Council Member Thompson asked for Council support to reinstate the Red-Light Camera program, and to ask the Board of Education to allocate some of the funding they will receive from the program to the School Resource Officer program.

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of Council was to direct staff to move this item forward to reinstate the Red-Light Cameras program. Council Members

Davis, Benavente, McNair and Hondros were opposed to the consensus vote.

#### **6.08 City Council Agenda Item Request - Council Travel - Council Member Haire**

Council Member Haire presented this item and asked for Council to support using travel and training funds for purchase of tokens of appreciation, plaques, framed certificates, pins, and additional coins.

Discussion ensued. Council Members Benavente, Davis, Jensen, Greene, McNair and Hondros all expressed opposition to the request.

Council Member Haire moved to send this item to the Council Policy Review Committee to advise how to restructure the budget or implement putting additional funds in the budget for enhanced tokens of appreciation. Consensus of Council was in favor of the motion, Council Member Benavente was in opposition to the motion.

Mayor Colvin stated this item is now disconnected from the travel budget and now it is to increase funds for presentation items.

#### **6.09 City Council Agenda Item Request - Term Limits - Council Members Benavente, Greene, and Hondros**

Council Member Benavente presented this item and stated term limits ensure a healthy rotation of leadership, prevent stagnation, and encourage new voices to participate in creating our City's future. This policy fosters accountability, responsiveness, and a government that truly reflects the evolving needs of our residents.

Discussion ensued.

Council Member Benavente asked for a consensus vote to move this item forward to the Council Policies Review Committee for additional research and provide options. The consensus vote failed by a vote of 3 in favor to 7 in opposition (Mayor Colvin, Council Members Jensen, Davis, Haire, Thompson, McNair, and Banks-McLaughlin).

#### **6.010 City Council Agenda Item Request - Election Reform - Council Members Benavente, Greene, and Hondros**

Council Member Benavente presented this item and asked for support of the potential reforms to the municipal election: At-Large City Seats, Four-Year Terms of Office, Even-Year Elections, Ranked Choice, and Publicly Funded Elections.

Discussion ensued.

Council Member Benavente requested to move this item forward to the Council Policy Committee for review. The consensus vote failed by a vote of 5 in favor to 5 in opposition. (Mayor Colvin, Council Members Jensen, Davis, Haire, and Thompson).

#### **6.011 City Council Agenda Item Request - Bike Lane Code Update - Council Member Benavente**

Council Member Benavente presented this item and requested the City Attorney's Office address lack of clarity of the Code of Ordinances, Section 16 - 263, and 294 - Bike Lanes.

Discussion ensued.

Consensus of Council was to direct the City Attorney to work with whichever departments, to define what bike lanes are and bring back options of how to best revise the Code.

### **7.0 ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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PAMELA J. MEGILL  
City Clerk  
010625

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MITCH COLVIN  
Mayor