



CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

March 13, 2025 at 6:00 PM

CitySpace: 100 5th St NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902

The Charlottesville City Council convened in a special meeting on Thursday, March 13, 2025, to discuss budget development for Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26), specifically regarding outside and non-profit agencies. Mayor Juandiego Wade called the meeting to order and called the roll, noting all councilors present: Mayor Juandiego Wade, Vice Mayor Brian Pinkston and Councilors Natalie Oschrin, Michael Payne and Lloyd Snook. Mr. Wade turned the meeting over to Budget Director Kristina Hammill, who summarized the meeting agenda:

- 1) Vibrant Community Fund (VCF)
 - 2) Housing Operations and Program Support (HOPS)
 - 3) Pathways
 - 4) Fundamental Agencies
 - 5) Intergovernmental Agency Budget Adjustments
 - 6) Off-Cycle Requests
 - 7) Public Hearing Date Change
1. Hunter Smith, Human Services Planner, presented the Vibrant Community Fund (VCF) FY26 Report. City Manager Samuel Sanders, Jr., added recommendations for disbursing one-time funds from the City Manager's Discretionary Fund to supplement event requests. The FY26 VCF process continued to develop based largely on applicant and reviewer feedback from the FY25 process. Priority Areas for FY26 were based on the City Council Strategic Plan and included the following categories: Education, Youth and Family; Economic Impact and Jobs and Health and Public Safety. Applicants were able to select up to two of those categories per program. Arts and Cultural Programming were also included in the process. Arts and Cultural Events were moved to a different process.
 2. Antoine Williams, Housing Manager, presented recommendations for award Housing Operations and Program Support (HOPS) funds. The HOPS program was established in FY24 to separate affordable housing funding from the Vibrant Community Fund. It supports non-profit organizations focused on affordable housing and homelessness prevention. Funding is allocated through the Charlottesville Affordable Housing Fund (CAHF) Committee comprised of assigned city staff and appointed resident volunteers. Applications are reviewed and scored based on program quality, community impact, and alignment with city priorities. A Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) was issued in August 2024, with applications due by October 18, 2024. Sixteen applications were submitted, requesting a total of \$1,472,348 in funding and \$575,000 was available for granting. City Manager Sanders recommended removal of applications submitted by Fundamental Agencies.

Regarding CAHF funds, Mr. Sanders stated that recommendations would be presented at the March 17 City Council meeting. He provided an overview of recommendations for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, removing three proposals designated as ineligible and permitting full awards to the remaining seven proposals.
 3. Misty Graves, Human Service Director, presented the Pathways Fund Report. In FY24, \$1,064,703.56 in funding was disbursed to meet 1,237 payments. She provided an FY25 update and considerations for FY26:
 - Still investing \$1 million, plus the difference in staff salary increases.
 - Same amount for direct disbursements to the United Way = \$700,084.00

- Continue with no changes to eligibility and operate until funding is exhausted quarterly.
 - Change capping annual maximums to \$1,000.
 - Consider only covering payments for housing and eliminate utility bills.
 - Change eligibility criteria to prioritize higher levels of need.
4. Mr. Sanders presented the Fundamental Agencies funding proposal.
 5. Ms. Hammill explained Intergovernmental Agency budget adjustments for the Albemarle-Charlottesville Regional Jail and the Blue Ridge Juvenile Detention Center.
 6. Mr. Sanders expressed the desire for a defined process for off-cycle budget requests. He presented fund balances available for Council to allocate additional funds to meet service needs. He emphasized a need to support eviction prevention and homeless services.
 - At Council's request, Shayla Washington, Executive Director for the Blue Ridge Area Coalition for the Homeless (BRACH), explained the agency's off-cycle budget request. The request made in addition to capacity-building funds was to address several issues including staffing transition, technical glitches with the federal government website, and to help fund permanent supportive housing.
 7. Ms. Hammill explained the need for a date change for the Tax Rate Public Hearing for compliance with advertising requirements. She listed additional future public hearing and budget discussion dates.

Councilors asked clarifying questions throughout the meeting.

Mayor Wade opened the floor for comments from members of the public. The following individuals spoke in support of additional funding:

- Deanna Gould, Lighthouse Studio
- Jenn Winslow, Lighthouse Studio Board Chair
- Kristen Dillehunt, Operations Director for Light House Studio's Vinegar Hill Theatre
- Kate Lambert, CEO of Boys and Girls Club of Central Virginia
- Jane Colony Mills, Loaves and Fishes food pantry
- Lisa Capraro, Live Arts
- Daniela Pretzer, The Bridgeline
- Cliff Seltzer, The Bridgeline
- Dr. Mariane Asad Doyle, The Center for Nonprofit Excellence (CNE)
- Judith Selzer, Jefferson Area Board on Aging (JABA)

On motion by Snook, seconded by Oschrin, Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 p.m.

BY Order of City Council

BY Kyna Thomas, Clerk of Council