



City of Harrisonburg

409 S. Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Meeting Minutes - Draft City Council

Tuesday, July 8, 2025

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

1. Roll Call

Present: 4 - Vice-Mayor Dany Fleming, Council Member Laura Dent, Council Member Nasser Alsaadun and Council Member Monica Robinson

Absent: 1 - Mayor Deanna R. Reed

Also Present: 5 - City Manager Ande Banks, City Attorney Chris Brown, City Clerk Pam Ulmer, Deputy Police Chief Rod Pollard and Chief Matthew Tobia

2. Moment of Silence

Vice Mayor Fleming offered a moment of silence

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Vice Mayor Fleming led the Pledge of Allegiance

4. Special Recognition

Chief Tobia accepted the recognition, staff from the fire department and members of the Community Fire Academy were present.

4.a. Recognition of the Community Fire Academy graduates

Matthew Tobia, Chief, Harrisonburg Fire Department, introduced staff of the Community Risk Reduction Education division of HFD: Lt Erin Stehle, Supervisor, Tori Tucker, specialist, and Riley Cross, specialist. Lt. Stehle provided an overview of the Community Education program and the Community Fire Academy. She then presented certificates of completion to the participants.

4.b. Proclamation recognizing July as Park and Recreation Month

Vice Mayor Fleming read the Proclamation recognizing July 2025 as Parks and Recreation Month. Matt Little, special events manager, Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation Department, accepted the proclamation, thanked Council for the recognition and recognized participants from the 50 and Wiser program and participants from the summer camp who were present.

5. Consent Agenda (any item placed on the consent agenda shall be removed and taken up as a separate matter, if so requested by any member of Council, otherwise all items will be voted on with one (1) motion)

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Council Member Dent, that the consent agenda be approved. The motion carried with a recorded roll call vote taken as follows:

Yes: 4 - Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Mayor Reed

5.a. Minutes from the June 24, 2025 City Council meeting

These minutes were approved on the consent agenda

5.b. Consider approving amendments to Title 4 Chapter 2, Article 5, Sections 4-2-76.1 through 4-2-80, related Transient Occupancy Tax, of the Code of Ordinances, City of Harrisonburg

These ordinance amendments were approved on second reading

6. Public Hearings

6.a. Consider a request for a special use permit to allow restaurants at 201 South Avenue

Adam Fletcher, director of Community Development, presented a special use permit request for property located at 201 South Avenue. He reviewed the property specifications, current zoning, and land use, and noted this is related to staff efforts to bring occupants into compliance. He stated the need to widen one entrance and close another entrance to enhance safety and bring up to DCSM standards.

He stated staff and Planning Commission (7-0) recommended approval of the request with the following staff recommended conditions:

1. The SUP is limited to 1 mobile food truck/trailer.
2. Within 60 days of approval of the SUP, permanently close South High Street and rebuild the curb and gutter.
3. Within 60 days of approval of the SUP, the entrance along South Avenue must be re-built to meet commercial entrance standards width of a minimum of 30 feet.
4. Within 60 days of approval of the SUP, complete the appropriate permits and work for 201 South Avenue to have its own electrical service and meter.
5. If the conditions are not met within 60 days of approval, then operations must cease until the conditions are met. However, upon request from the applicant and if the applicant has demonstrated diligent pursuit to complete the above conditions, the Zoning Administrator may grant one 60-day extension allowing the applicant a maximum of 120 days from SUP approval to complete the conditions.

Mr. Fletcher provided clarification on how a food truck differs from a restaurant but must follow many of the same requirements.

At 7:30 p.m., Vice Mayor Fleming closed the regular session and called the first public hearing to order. A notice appeared in the Daily News-Record on Wednesday, June 25, 2025, and Wednesday, July 2, 2025

Billy Martinez, property owner, spoke on the reasons for the request.

Discussion took place regarding the business on the property and the improvements to the aesthetics this request will make.

At 7:36 p.m., Vice Mayor Fleming closed the public hearing and the regular session reconvened.

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Council Member Alsaadun, to approve the special use permit request with conditions as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 4 - Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Mayor Reed

6.b. Consider a request to rezone 310 West View Street

Adam Fletcher, director of Community Development, presented a rezoning request for property located at 310 West View Street. He reviewed the parcel specifications and surrounding zoning, land use and the submitted proffer.

He stated staff and Planning Commission (7-0) recommend approval.

Discussion took place regarding the difference between R- 1 and R-8 zoning requirements and the reason for this request related to set-back allowances.

At 7:44 p.m., Vice Mayor Fleming closed the regular session and called the second public hearing to order. A notice appeared in the Daily News-Record on Wednesday, June 25, 2025, and Wednesday, July 2, 2025

Stacy Rose, applicant, stated he was available for any questions.

At 7:46 p.m., Vice Mayor Fleming closed the public hearing and the regular session reconvened.

A motion was made by Council Member Dent, seconded by Council Member Alsaadun, to approve the rezoning request as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 4 - Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Mayor Reed

6.c. Consider a request to rezone 810 Port Republic Road (The Vista at Forest Hills)

Agenda items 6c, 6d and 6e presented together.

Adam Fletcher, director of Community Development, presented a rezoning and two special use permit requests for property located at 810 Port Republic Road. He reviewed the reasoning for the rezoning request, the history of the site, the proffers offered and the plan for a new mixed-use student housing/retail complex.

He stated staff and Planning Commission (6-1) recommended all recommended conditions from staff.

At 8:03 p.m., Vice Mayor Fleming closed the regular session and called the third, fourth and fifth public hearing to order. A notice appeared in the Daily News-Record on Wednesday, June 25, 2025, and Wednesday, July 2, 2025

Ed Blackwell, AS Engineering, applicant's representative, spoke on the process that brought the changes requested.

Discussion took place regarding parking for the development, traffic impact, security, the parking garage design, and the use of the land in this area.

At 8:19 p.m., Vice Mayor Fleming closed the public hearing and the regular session reconvened.

A motion was made by Council Member Dent, seconded by Council Member Robinson, to approve the rezoning request as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 3 - Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent and Council Member Robinson

No: 1 - Council Member Alsaadun

Absent: 1 - Mayor Reed

6.d. Consider a request for a special use permit to allow multiple-family dwellings and/or mixed use buildings at 810 Port Republic Road (The Vista at Forest Hills)

Presented with Agenda item 6c

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Council Member Dent, to approve the special use permit with the additional condition requested by staff as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 3 - Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent and Council Member Robinson

No: 1 - Council Member Alsaadun

Absent: 1 - Mayor Reed

- 6.e.** Consider a request for a special use permit to allow reduction in required side and/or rear yard setbacks at 810 Port Republic Road (The Vista at Forest Hills)

Presented with Agenda item 6c

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Council Member Dent, to approve the special use permit with the additional condition requested by staff as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows

Yes: 3 - Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent and Council Member Robinson

No: 1 - Council Member Alsaadun

Absent: 1 - Mayor Reed

- 6.f.** Consider adopting an ordinance granting a lease of certain real property of the City of Harrisonburg located at 2230 Ramblewood Road.

Agenda item 6f and 7a presented together.

Chris Brown, City Attorney, reviewed the purpose of the ordinance enactment and the resolution, and noted that Mr. Brian O'Dell, General Manager of Harrisonburg Electric Commission (HEC), is present for any clarifications. Mr. Brown reviewed HEC's role in providing electricity to the city as a distributor and not a producer; the proposed project to build battery storage; the concept of battery storage and its effects on peak energy use hours; the 15-year agreements proposed related to the project; and the relationships with the Virginia Municipal Electric Association NO. 1 (VMEA) and its various members.

Mr. O'Dell concurred with Mr. Brown's remarks and discussed the economic benefits of battery storage to HEC and its customers; that the 15-year agreement is conditional on performance and ability of output; and he noted HEC could terminate before if needed.

Discussion took place regarding provisions in the VMEA contract; savings during peak hours which allow for better rate regulation; the localities involved in this agreement; and the safety of the batteries.

At 9:05 p.m., Vice Mayor Fleming closed the regular session and called the sixth public hearing to order. A notice appeared in the Daily News-Record on Monday, June 23, 2025, and Monday, June 30, 2025

There being no one desiring to be heard, Vice Mayor Fleming closed the public hearing at 9:06 p.m., and the regular session reconvened.

A motion was made by Council Member Dent, seconded by Council Member Alsaadun, to approve the ordinance enactment as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

7. Regular Items

- 7.a.** Consider adopting a resolution authorizing Harrisonburg Electric Commission to enter into a Battery Energy Storage System Output Purchase Agreement and Interconnection Agreement for Battery Energy Storage Facility for a term in excess of 10 years.

Presented with Agenda item # 6f

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Council Member Alsaadun, to adopt the resolution as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 4 - Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Mayor Reed

- 7.b.** Revised Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program Adoption

Tom Hartman, director of Public Works, presented a review of the revised Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program. He discussed community support for traffic calming; what traffic calming entails; the existing program; new updates including the streamlining of the request process; and the timeline for implementation of the program.

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Council Member Alsaadun, to approve the request as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 4 - Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Mayor Reed

8. Other Matters

8.a. Comments from the public, limited to five minutes, on matters not on the regular agenda. (Name and address are required)

James Sheets, 265 N. Main Street, paid compliments to city staff for some accessibility accommodations, protested trespass issued to him on public transit,

and shared complaints about city staff.

8.b. City Council and Staff

Vice Mayor Fleming welcomed Council Member Alsaadun back from his recent trip; applauded the city's fireworks display; reported on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in government conference; his attendance to an upcoming meeting with NLC University Communities committee; celebrated his 30th wedding anniversary; discussed Economic Development's role in a southern cities economic mobility cohort; an upcoming Chamber of Commerce event; and reminded everyone about the Fire Department's Annual Pizza Night.

Council Member Alsaadun stated he was happy to be back and refreshed.

Council Member Dent spoke on the opening of the Spraygrounds; she expressed desire for more bike racks; mentioned the continuing Levitt concert series; announced upcoming NLC meeting; discussed issue of data centers around state; and announced Resilient Virginia conference to be held in city this month.

Council Member Robinson spoke on the opening of the Spraygrounds; the new temporary changes to Mason Street and the neighborhood block party on North Mason Street as part of that project on July 12, 2025, from 3pm to 7pm.

9. Boards and Commissions

9.a. Planning Commission

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Council Member Dent, to appoint Kenneth Kettler to an unexpired term to expire January 4, 2029, and Randall Seitz to an unexpired term to expire on December 31, 2027. The vote carried with a unanimous voice vote.

10. Closed Session

11. Adjournment

At 9:50 p.m., there being no further business and on motion adopted, the meeting was adjourned.

CITY CLERK

MAYOR