

## REGULAR MEETING

APRIL 28, 1998

At a regular meeting of Council held this evening at 7:30 p.m., there were present: Mayor Rodney Eagle; City Manager Steven E. Stewart; Assistant City Manager Roger Baker; City Attorney Earl Q. Thumma, Jr.; Vice-Mayor Hugh J. Lantz; Council Member John H. Byrd, Jr., and Larry M. Rogers; City Clerk Yvonne Bonnie Ryan and Chief of Police Donald Harper. Absent: Council Member Walter F. Green, III.

Mayor Eagle delivered the invocation and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice-Mayor Lantz offered a motion to approve the consent agenda, including approval of the minutes and the second reading of supplemental appropriations for the Police Department and Parking Authority. The motion was seconded by Council Member Byrd, and approved with a unanimous recorded vote of Council Members present.

✓ City Manager Stewart briefly reviewed the proposed 1998-99 budget. A presentation was made to Council on April 14, and this document has been available to the public. He reiterated there are no tax rates or general fund fees that will increase in the proposed 1998-99 budget. City Manager Stewart explained that in terms of expenditures the budget focuses on three primary functions, which include education, public safety and infrastructure. The proposed budget represents a 12.95% decrease in net expenditures from the 1997-98 budget as amended. He reviewed some of the 12 goals established at the August 1996 Council Planning Session. The City will continue to focus on economic development next year with the creation of a full-time Economic Development Department. There are considerable increases in marketing funds to market this community, to hopefully provide better and higher paying jobs for citizens in the community. The City is committed to public safety. The proposed Police Department budget will include adding four new police officers and a pilot program will begin in July allowing two police officers to take cruisers home with them. The Fire Department budget proposed hiring six new firefighters after January 1st. The City also wants to curtail bonded indebtedness by not issuing new general obligation bonds. The City also will take a stronger look at updating and revisiting our water supply to make sure that the City has an adequate water supply for the future. The General Fund revenue picture is brighter than last year in that revenues are projected to increase by \$2.7 million. The primary increase will occur in real estate and personal property revenues, business license revenues, and an increased contribution from Harrisonburg Electric Commission. He also noted that the City will be making a significant contribution to Rockingham County for the expansion of the joint landfill operation, landfill equipment and closing the City's existing landfill. The single largest transfer from the General Fund is for the schools which represents about 41% of the total general fund budget. The City's proposed increase to the school next year is \$900,000. There is also almost another \$130,000 in reduction from debt service that won't have to be spent for debt service next year that can go into instruction, administration, and the other classifications. There is about \$1,030,000 in additional funds that can be spent on items other than debt service. The reduction in debt service for next year resulted by paying off the debt for the VRS. Mr. Stewart reviewed debt service for the schools

during the last ten years, and he noted that the City has renovated the high school, built a new elementary school, made additions to the middle school, and made improvements to Waterman Elementary School. The City's total projected 1998-99 revenue from all property taxes (real estate and personal) including penalties and interest, is \$15,847,500. The City's proposed contribution to the school budget for next year is \$18,172,932. This amount does not include the fact that the City will be replacing two school buses at a cost of \$160,000. He reviewed the City's infrastructure, including replacing a 1982 fire truck, resurfacing streets, replacing equipment in the Public Works Department, replacing playground equipment at Westover Park, replacing the roof at Gilkerson Community Activity Center, replacing water mains, replacing two school buses, and replacing North Main Street Bridge.

At 7:53 p.m., Mayor Eagle closed the regular session temporarily and called the evening's public hearing to order. The following notice appeared in the Daily-News Record on Saturday, April 18, 1998.

**CITY OF HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA**  
**PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 1999**  
**For information and fiscal planning purposes only**

A public hearing will be held by the Harrisonburg City Council on Tuesday, April 28, 1998 at 7:30 p.m. in the Harrisonburg Municipal Building, 345 South Main Street, Harrisonburg, Virginia. Interested citizens are encouraged to attend and express their views.

<u>Revenue-By Funds</u>	1998-99 As <u>Proposed</u>	1997-98 As <u>Amended</u>
General	44,177,507	43,189,692
School	30,021,870	29,902,645
General Capital Projects	987,300	11,751,804
School Capital Projects	-	976,937
Water Capital Projects	1,515,000	2,530,423
Sewer Capital Projects	1,800,000	1,768,584
Sanitation Capital Projects	400,000	1,008,792
Parking Authority Capital Projects	60,000	-
Water	4,914,677	4,783,798
Sewer	6,258,602	5,325,343
Public Transportation	3,175,271	2,822,417
Sanitation	6,439,640	5,496,869
Parking Authority	288,597	213,747
Central Garage	485,889	458,138
Central Stores Operating	<u>81,132</u>	<u>73,104</u>
Gross	100,605,485	110,302,293
Inter fund transfers	(26,333,032)	(25,257,210)

Net	<u>74,272,453</u>	<u>85,045,083</u>
<b><u>Expenditures - By Funds</u></b>		
General	44,177,507	43,189,692
School	30,021,870	29,902,645
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Copies of the proposed budget in its entirety are available for public review in the City Manager's office, 345 South Main Street, Harrisonburg, Virginia and the Rockingham Public Library, 45 Newman Avenue, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Steven E. Stewart  
City Manager  
City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

Mayor Eagle called on anyone present desiring to speak either for or against the 1998-99 budget.

Diane Foucar-Szocki, Chair of the Harrisonburg City Schools, appealed to Council to fully fund the board's proposed increase of approximately \$1.2 in the operating budget. She said if the Council's proposed budget is adopted, the School Board will have to cut its budget by \$220,059. In addition to this reduction, the School Board will have to further reduce identified areas of need in the budget by \$161,000. She requested that Council provide the \$900,000 to meet the schools' operational needs and also to add the additional \$161,000 for increased debt service. This would enable the school district to continue offering quality education for the City's students and make strives forward in technology, illiteracy and other instructional programs.

Dr. Don Ford, Superintendent of Harrisonburg City Schools, said that Harrisonburg has a long tradition of providing quality educational programs for children. He said, "I am happy to be a part of a school division in a City that understands the importance of good education and is willing to do what is necessary to continue that tradition." A feasibility study and condition report was completed by architects in January 1997 identifying significant repairs and renovations that were needed in the three older elementary schools at an estimated cost of \$8.8 million. It was determined that although some changes in the scope of work might occur, the report accurately depicted what needed to be done for the schools. He suggested that these building improvements to the three elementary schools be made over a three-year period rather than stretched out to 2006. He also noted that some improvements and renovations have been made including repairing roofs, replacing roofs, upgrading electrical service, water proofing school foundations, and computer networking at the schools. Bids have been submitted for exterior lighting and gutter and down spout replacement at some schools. There is still a lot to do and it will take a substantial financial commitment from Council to finish what has been started. Mr. Ford said that the estimated cost of the work remaining would be approximately \$8 million. He noted that no monies are better invested than those we invest in the future of our children.

Dr. Cathy Slusher said that she appreciated the addition of the Police Officers and Firefighters into the budget. These additions confirm the School Board request because where there are increased needs for Police Officers and Firefighters there are increased needs in our schools. She mentioned that many counties put 50% or more into their school budgets. There being no others desiring to be heard, the public hearing was declared closed at 8:05 p.m., and the regular session reconvened. City Manager Stewart clarified several of Dr. Slusher's comments by noting that counties do not provide the same range of services that City governments do. He said that percentages of total budgets compared from Cities to Counties is very misleading. When reviewing the per pupil expenditure, it is higher in the City than it is in Rockingham County on a local basis. Counties do not provide street maintenance, paid fire protection, City police protection, and do not provide door to door refuse pick-up. The City's budget is typically larger because of the range of services provided beyond just provision of schools. Council Member Rogers offered a motion to table approving the budget for a first reading until the next Council meeting because of the importance of the budget and possibly revisiting some of the issues and comments. The motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Lantz, and approved with a unanimous vote of Council Members present. Mayor Eagle suggested that the School Board take another look at the 24.75 additional personnel that they have requested in the budget and provide some information for him to review.

✓ Taylor Howell, Manager of the local Virginia Employment Commission, presented the 1998 Plan of Service of Virginia Employment Commission for endorsement. He explained that the plan has been approved by the Virginia Employment Commission, the Government Employment Training Division, and the local SDA Council. He reviewed the special emphasis programs for this year including increasing job openings and referrals by 3% over the PY97 levels, labor exchange, and meeting or exceeding unemployment insurance programs. He also said that accomplishing some of the programs will be difficult due to the low employment in the area. They have instituted several different procedures in the office this year including cross-training all of the permanent staff. They have instituted mass claim filing for major employers in the area. Each VEC local office will be strengthening collaborative efforts with other state and local agencies through the Career Connect Workforce System. Virginia has been working with the Government Employment Training Division

to develop a web site called Career Connect. It will provide electronic linkage with different communities. Following further discussion and comments, Council Member Rogers offered a motion to endorse the 1998 Service Plan as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Lantz, and approved with a unanimous vote of Council Members present.

✓ Planning and Community Development Director Turner introduced a request by Kenneth W. Gibson for approval of a Preliminary Plan, with a variance to Section 10-24-2(g) of the subdivision ordinance. This property is located at 1321 Port Republic Road. The applicant is requesting to vacate the interior lot lines shown on the earlier plat, and relocate the lot lines to create a usable lot. Proposed lot one would contain approximately 94 feet of lot width at the frontage. Proposed lot two would remain less than 50 feet in width, which is less than required; however, the overall square footage of both lots would exceed the 10,000 square foot minimum area requirements of the R-1 zoning classification. Before this property was annexed into the City, it had been surveyed as two parcels; however, since annexation it has been assessed as one parcel. This new subdivision would relocate the previous division line to divide this parcel into two and allow the lot in the back to be a vacant lot. It would be conveyed separately and developed with a single family home. She said that Planning Commission recommended approval of the request, except Mayor Eagle who abstained at the meeting. Vice-Mayor Lantz offered a motion to approve the request as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Byrd, and approved with a unanimous vote of Council Members present.

✓ City Manager Stewart presented a resolution for Council's consideration authorizing the issuance of general obligation bonds. He explained that these bonds in the amount of \$499,900 would allow the Housing Authority to acquire, rehabilitate and construct improvements on real estate owned by the authority. The Housing Authority will commit to refund the advance back to the City, subject to annual appropriations by the Redevelopment and Housing Authority. Mr. Stewart noted that this is a further opportunity for the City to participate in the redevelopment of downtown Harrisonburg. Vice-Mayor Lantz offered a motion to approve this resolution for a first reading and to schedule a public hearing on May 12th. The motion was seconded by Council Member Byrd, and approved with a unanimous recorded vote of Council Members present.

✓ City Manager Stewart explained that the Virginia Municipal League is accepting nominations for its six policy committees. He also noted that the Executive Committee has made a change in the requirement for serving on the Policy Committee. In the past years, each jurisdiction has been allowed to nominate up to two (2) people for each committee consisting of either a City staff member, governing body member or a combination. This year the Executive Committee has stated that each local government may appoint up to two people per policy committee; however, one nomination for each policy committee should be an elected official. Since the City only has five elected Council Members, having a member of Council on each of the six committees would be impossible. Mr. Stewart explained that he had mentioned this fact to the VML, and they had not considered this point. Following further discussion and comments, Council Member Rogers offered a motion to submit these nominations to the Virginia Municipal League Policy Committee. Mike Collins to serve on the Environmental Quality Committee, Lester Seal and Steven Stewart to serve on the Finance Committee, Roger Baker and Stacy Turner to serve on the General Laws Committee, Larry Rogers to serve on the Human Development & Education Committee, Larry Shifflett to serve

on the Public Safety, and Reggie Smith to serve on the Transportation Committee. The motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Lantz, and approved with a unanimous vote of Council Members present.

✓ City Manager Stewart presented a request for a reallocation of current budget estimates. He explained that the court appointed attorney's budget is currently overspent. The City has very little control over this expenditure and must pay for attorneys appointed by the court. Council Member Rogers offered a motion to approve the transfer of these funds.

\$7,000.00 chge. to: 1000-121711-41050 Annual leave- Separation

\$7,000.00 chge. to: 1000-121711-41050 Sick leave - Separation

\$14,000.00 approp. to: 1000-330231-43151 Court appointed attorneys

The motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Lantz, and approved with a unanimous vote of Council Members present.

✓ City Manager Stewart presented a request to transfer funds from a capital outlay in the traffic engineering's budget to the capital project's fund. This money will be used to install traffic lights at Neff Avenue & Reservoir Street. Vice-Mayor Lantz offered a motion to approve the transfer of these funds.

\$93,705.71 chge. to: 1000-410741-48111 Machinery & Equipment

\$93,705.71 approp. to 1000-990111-49216 Transfer to Capital Projects Fund

The motion was seconded by Council Member Byrd, and approved with a unanimous vote of Council Members present.

At 8:34 p.m., Vice-Mayor Lantz offered a motion that Council enter an executive session for discussion and consideration of personnel and prospective candidates to be appointed to the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission, Social Services Advisory Board, Harrisonburg-Rockingham Regional Sewer Authority, and Community Services (Chapter 10) Board, exempt from public meeting requirements pursuant to Section 2.1-344(A)(1) of the Code of Virginia. Consultation with the City Attorney and briefings by staff members pertaining to probable litigation, requiring the provision of legal advice by the City Attorney, exempt from public meeting requirements pursuant to Section 2.1-344(A)(7) of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended. The motion was seconded by Council Member Rogers, and approved with a unanimous vote of Council Members present.

At 9:45 p.m., the executive session was declared closed and the regular session reconvened. The following statement was agreed to with a unanimous recorded vote of the Council: I hereby certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that (1) only public matters lawfully exempt from open meeting requirements pursuant to Chapter 21 of title 2.1 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the executive or closed meeting were convened were heard, discussed or considered in the executive session by the City Council.

Council Member Rogers offered a motion that Stacy Turner be appointed to a term on the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission to expire on June 30, 2001. The motion was seconded by Council Member Byrd, and approved with a unanimous vote of Council Members present.

At 9:46 p.m., there being no further business and on motion adopted the meeting was adjourned.

Yvonne Ryan, Conc  
CLERK

Rodney L Eagle  
MAYOR