



**Municipal Building Council Chamber**

**Minutes of the Burlington  
City Council Work Session  
Virtual Meeting  
5:00pm - Monday, December 7, 2020**

[www.BurlingtonNC.gov/councilpackets](http://www.BurlingtonNC.gov/councilpackets)

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, this meeting was convened remotely using the Zoom Webinar platform.

**Council Members Present:**

Mayor Ian Baltutis  
Mayor Pro Tem Kathy Hykes  
Council Member Robert Ward  
Council Member Harold Owen  
Council Member James Butler

**Council Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:**

City Manager, Hardin Watkins  
City Attorney, David Huffman  
Interim City Clerk, Beverly Smith

Jessica Arias, Alan Balog, Scott Bibler, Peter Bishop, Greg Britt, Jaime Joyner, Rachel Kelly, Nolan Kirkman, Todd Lambert, Morgan Lasater, Todd Lambert, Tony Laws, Jamie Lawson, Jay Mebane, Blake Moyer, Mike Nunn, Conrad Olmedo, Bob Patterson, Peggy Reece, Louisa Sholar, Jeff Smythe, and John Vernon.

**Media Present:** Tomas Murawski, Alamance News

**A) Economic Development Strategic Plan Kick Off**

Economic Development Director Peter Bishop introduced consultant, Crystal Morphis, Creative Economic Development Consulting.

Crystal Morphis reported Creative Economic Development Consulting had worked with the City of Burlington during an executive search and on other economic development matters. She provided a brief overview of the strategic planning process that was largely led by City staff. She reported the project planning launched in December and will continue through March 2021 at which time a report would be delivered based on research, community feedback, stakeholder engagement, and area assessments.

**B) 2021 Proposed Fees and Charges Schedule**

Director of Finance and Risk Management Peggy Reece presented on the proposed fee changes from the Fire Department, Engineering, Inspections, and Recreation Department. She reported the Recreation fees will be postponed to a future date in the FY budget preparations due to concerns expressed from

City Council on those proposed fee changes. She stated City staff from Fire Department, Engineering, and Inspections were in attendance and available for any questions or concerns.

Council Member Ward inquired on the removal of Recreation fees for further review and discussion.

Ms. Reece responded the Recreation fees will be discussed if there are questions, but it's likely all of the Recreation fees will be postponed for consideration during the budget process for FY 21-22.

Mayor Baltutis stated he would like to discuss the Recreation fees in January 2021.

Council Member Owen responded he would like to discuss the Recreation fees during the budget process due to some of the recommended fee increases that could impact lower income families during these times and would like to have more discussion.

Council Member Ward agreed and asked to have more discussion and see more information on a pyramid model.

Mayor Pro Tem Hykes commented on the challenges with the fee concepts and agreed to future discussion without causing impacts during COVID.

Council Member Butler applauded the City staff for their thorough review and work completed on the fees and charges process and agreed to a future discussion for the Recreation and Parks fees to echo Council Member Owen's comments and the timing.

City Manager Watkins addressed City Council comments and explained priority-based budgeting had and research identified Recreation and Parks as a good place to start. He stated a path forward would include more discussion by City staff with City Council over January and February to explain the philosophies and research in more detail.

### **C) Public Art Donations**

Assistant City Manager, Administrative Services Rachel Kelly provided a brief overview of the Public Art Committee Evaluation criteria in which guidance is provided in acceptance of donations of art to the City. She reported the Public Art, Memorial, and Honorary (PAMH) Policy approved in 2017 provides for the review of the donation applications by the Public Art Committee with a recommendation to the City Manager for City Council consideration and approval.

Ms. Kelly presented on the applications received by the following:

1. The New Leaf Society, on behalf of Bill and Annelle Coble, seeks to donate a \$65,000 bronze sculpture of a young girl, boy and dog (life-size renderings of their children at ages 6 and 3.5) to be placed at the Rose Garden across from the Aycock Avenue home of the Cobles.
2. Mr. Charles Kleeberg seeks to donate a North Park Carousel Horse to be placed at either City Park or North Park and be used to educate about the Jim Crow Era park system. The early 1900s.

3. carousel horse is valued at approximately \$8,000 and would require approximately \$9,000 in restoration.

Ms. Kelly reported the Public Art Ad Hoc Committee recommends Committee Recommends Preliminary Approval contingent on submittal of acceptable artistic rendering and adherence to Section 6 of the PAMH Policy which requires a Professional Engineer sealed base plate and foundation design as well as a structural evaluation proving the art is suitable for outdoor display.

Janice Burgess, New Leaf Society commented the bronze statue would be mounted in its location and secured as required.

Ms. Kelly reported the Public Art Ad Hoc Committee recommends acceptance of the North Park Carousel Horse donation. She reported the donor's request if the donation is accepted is that it be placed at City Park or North Park and used to educate about the Jim Crow Era "separate but equal" park system. She reported City staff recommends restoring as part of the restoration of the Burlington Dentzel Carousel and restore this piece of art in an effort to preserve a part of the community's physical history and acknowledge the evolution of both North Park and carousels in Burlington through the display of this donation. She stated the Carousel House budget includes public art allocation which could be used to restore and display the North Park Carousel Horse.

Following a brief discussion, Council consensus was to place an addition on the December 8, 2020, City Council Meeting to accept the two donations as presented.

#### **D) Pandemic Impacts Financial Update on FY2020-2021**

Director of Finance and Risk Management, Peggy Reece reported the City has been informed that interest rates for revenue bonds for the Water and Sewer funds could provide for a \$4 to \$4.5 million dollars savings if the City put out a bid to banks for a private offering. She requested Council approval to proceed. She reported this request came in from our independent financial advisors.

City Council consensus was to proceed with bids for this savings opportunity.

Ms. Reece provided an update on the major revenue sources for July through November for FY 2020-2021. She reported activity for the General Fund and pandemic-related topics. She provided an overview of the general fund expenditures as well as the status of water resources revenues and expenditures.

City Manager Hardin Watkins reported City Council adopted the FY 20-21 budget in June 2020, staff provided an update at the September Work Session and this update provides for a 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter update on the status of the City's budget. He reported there are future budget adjustments to consider, recommendations from the Budget Team to City Council over the remaining Quarters of FY 20-21, and efforts to address actual workload demands with 26 frozen positions and furloughed part time positions due to the pandemic. He explained the City has reduced spending across all departments with the use of CARES Act funds for needs, revenue receipts are higher than projected, some unanticipated needs have risen during this time.

Manager Watkins provided an update on major revenue sources from July 2020 to November 2020 and reported the following:

**Sales Tax**

10.27% over last year's amounts for the same time period for the first 4 months of FY 20-21. Total = \$492,000 more than budgeted for June – September 2020. City budgeted 11% decline. (21% to the good)

**CARES Act Funding**

\$534,000 received. Being applied to assist with new pay types (Family First Act) and other COVID expenses. (City has expended \$534,000 less than expected upon budget adoption.)

**Property Tax Collections**

\$580,000 over the same time period for prior fiscal year. Due to banks paying mortgage-collected taxes at earliest date + lots of home sales – both positively impact collections.

City Manager Watkins suggested the following employee pay expenditures which comes as a top recommendation from the Budget Team:

- 1.5% merit increase for all full-time employees (excluding sworn police in separate D.I. pay plan) that are performing satisfactorily this FY.
- 1% merit increase = \$147,200 (already set aside in Adopted FY 20-21 Budget)  
Additional 0.5% merit increase = \$73,600 (will need to be allocated from revenues noted above in budget amendment.)

Manager Watkins provided an overview of other expenditures and reported the main purpose would be to restore mission critical frozen full-time and part-time positions across multiple departments to continue meeting the following needs:

- Focus on front-line services delivery & ensuring strong leadership in public works operations
- Unfreeze 9 FT & 4 PT: Building Services, Streets, Grounds & Cemeteries, Solid Waste, Recreation Maintenance, Animal Services (animal care, veterinary health, customer service), Water Line Maintenance
- Frozen for portion of FY but now restored 3 FT: Fire, Streets, Recreation
- Remaining frozen 6 FT & 5 PT : Finance/Budget, Recreation (golf maintenance, teen programs, athletic maintenance, events), Water Resources (pipe maintenance, wastewater operations)

Manager Watkins reported the City collects a mixed beverage tax on behalf of RTSA (Residential Treatment Services) and with closing of bars, that money did not come in as expected and proposes the City provide \$23,000 from the general fund to help support their services to the community. He reported the City proposes moving forward with the Alamance Chamber four quarters payment for services in the amount of \$12,500, and provide funding for an employee health, wellbeing, and engagement platform (Virgin Pulse via Carillion Clinic) in the amount of \$27,500.

Manager Watkins concluded the revenue outlook is positive, the top priority request is employee merit pay increases effective January 2021, restoring key positions to ensure strong service delivery, and three additional expenditures for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the FY. He reported the next steps are

for City Council to consider an addition to the December 8, 2020 City Council meeting agenda for the approval of Budget Amendment 2021-18 to implement these recommendations.

Council Member Butler commented on the employee pay increase and recommended seeking a way to address the impact on employees especially the lower wage. He stated he fully supports the recommended proposal of merit increases and asked to explore and discuss additional support to the lower wage employees.

Council Member Ward agreed with Council Member Butler and expressed his appreciation for City employees and would be in favor of considering a one-time payment of \$500 to lower wage employees throughout the organization.

City Manager Watkins stated the employees with an hourly wage of \$24.00 or less would be eligible.

Mayor Pro Tem Hykes and Council Member Owen confirmed they were in favor of the additional payment.

Mayor Baltutis inquired about the part-time employees and asked if there has been any consideration for those employees.

City Manager Watkins responded there has been some discussion about how to include the regular part time staff and welcomed further discussion and consideration.

Human Resources Director Jaime Joyner stated the part time regular staff that work at least 19 hours or less per week continually could be considered and provided to Finance for a number to calculate an adjustment.

Following a brief discussion, City Council consensus was to proceed with the addition of a proposed Budget Amendment on the December 8, 2021, City Council Meeting for City Council to consider the recommended salary adjustments for full-time and part-time City employees.

City Manager Watkins expressed gratitude to City Council on behalf of City colleagues' staff for consideration of the employee pay expenditures.

## **E) Backyard Chicken Ordinance**

Planning Manager Conrad Olmedo presented a draft Backyard Chicken Ordinance for City Council discussion for future consideration. He provided background and an overview of the draft Ordinance resultant from staff collaboration, over 1,300 community survey responses, and existing City Code of Ordinances language research from other North Carolina jurisdictions. He provided an overview of the draft changes from the City of Burlington Code of Ordinances, Section 6-13 and Unified Development Ordinance and shared the following

### **Backyard Chicken Ordinance – DRAFT III**

**Code of Ordinances**

SECTION 6-13. – Keeping of certain fowl prohibited.

It shall be unlawful for any person to have and keep fowl within the city limits with the exception of chickens as prescribed in the City of Burlington Unified Development Ordinance.

**Unified Development Ordinance**

**NEW DEFINITIONS, CHAPTER 8**

<b>CHICKEN</b>	A domestic fowl, commonly called a “chicken” and scientifically named <i>Gallus Gallus Domesticus</i> , customarily used for the production of meat or eggs; excluding larger domestic fowl such as, ducks, geese, and turkeys that may also be used for the production of meat or eggs.
<b>CHICKEN COOP</b>	A fully enclosed structure that is well ventilated where chickens are kept safe and secure, which contains nest boxes for chickens to lay eggs in and perches for chickens to sleep on.
<b>CHICKEN ENCLOSURE</b>	A fully enclosed area that is covered, attached to the coop, and allows chickens to run around and peck outside.
<b>TERMINATION AND PROCESSING</b>	An action that involves the humane preparation, catching, handling, restraint, stunning, neck dislocation, and neck cutting that leads to the termination of life of a chicken and the preparation involved in the sanitary processing of chicken for consumption.

**ACCESSORY USE, CHAPTER 4**

<b>TABLE 4.5.E: COMMON ACCESSORY USE TABLE [1]</b>															
<b>(AMENDED 3.17.20 UDOTA-02-20)</b>															
“A” = Allowed if included in planned development master plan or terms and conditions statement															
“C” = Permitted, subject to <u>Section 2.4.P, Rezoning</u> , applicable accessory use-specific standards, and identified in the conditions of approval															
“P” = Permitted, subject to applicable accessory use-specific standards															
“S” = Permitted subject to <u>Section 2.4.T, Special Use Permit</u> , and accessory use-specific standards															
“ ” (blank cell) = Not allowed or no additional accessory use-specific standards															
ACCESSORY USE TYPE	RESIDENTIAL					COMMERCIAL					IND.			PD & PDD	ACC. USE-SPECIFIC STANDARDS
	PC	RMH	LDR	MDR	HDR	MX	OI	NB	GB	CBD	LI	MI	HI		
Backyard Chickens			P	P	P									A	TBD

**1. Backyard Chickens**

The keeping of chickens shall be permitted as an accessory use in conjunction with detached, single-family residential uses in the Low Density Residential (LDR), Medium Density Residential (MDR), High Density Residential (HDR), and Planned Development (PD) zone districts. Such uses shall only occur in accordance with the following:

**a. Maximum Allowed**

- i. A property may have a maximum of 4 chickens per lot.

**b. Prohibitions**

- i. Roosters are prohibited.
- ii. Eggs, chicks, adult chickens, and manure are for personal use only and shall not be sold.
- iii. The on-site termination or processing of chickens shall be done in a humane and sanitary manner, within an enclosed structure, and not in view of any public area or adjacent property.
- iv. Chickens shall not be permitted to run freely outside of a coop or an enclosure.

**c. Coop and Enclosure Requirements**

- i. Chickens shall be provided with a coop and enclosure, which may be portable.
- ii. Chickens shall be secured in the coop during non-daylight hours.
- iii. A coop shall provide a minimum of three-square feet in floor area per chicken and maintain a minimum clearance of at least 18 inches in height.
- iv. An enclosure shall include at least five square feet per chicken and be covered to prevent chickens from flying out.

**d. Coop and Enclosure Minimum Setbacks**

- i. A coop and enclosure shall be:
  1. Setback a minimum of 25 feet from side and rear property lines.
  2. No closer than 50 feet to a residential dwelling on an adjacent lot.
  3. Closer to the chicken owner's primary living structure than the neighbors' living structures.
  4. Located behind the line formed by the back wall of the residence.

**e. Required Maintenance, Upkeep, and Well Being**

- i. Coop and enclosures shall be properly designed and constructed to provide adequate security from rodents, wild birds, and predators; sufficient ventilation; and suitable shelter for the chickens.
- ii. Chickens shall have adequate access to feed, clean water, and bedding at all times.
- iii. The coop, enclosure, and surrounding area shall be cleaned of droppings, free of accumulated moisture, uneaten feed, feathers and other waste, and shall be kept in a neat and sanitary condition at all times to preclude odors and aesthetic nuisances.
- iv. Feed shall be stored in a secure and waterproof container.
- v. All stored manure shall be completely contained in a waterproof container that remains sealed at all times except during filling and emptying.
- vi. Any compost using chicken manure shall be required to be produced in an enclosed backyard composter.
- vii. If a chicken dies from causes other than by termination and processing, it shall be promptly placed into a plastic bag, closed securely, and disposed of with household waste.
- viii. Compliance shall be required with Chapter 6 – Animals and Fowl and Chapter 22 – Nuisances of the City of Burlington's Code of Ordinances.

## BACKYARD CHICKEN ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY

Animal Services	Code Enforcement
<b>Maximum number of chickens</b>	Selling of chicken manure, eggs, meat
<b>Roosters</b>	Coop and enclosure
<b>Loose chickens, running freely</b>	Securing during non-daylight hour
<b>Access to feed, clean water</b>	Minimum dimension requirements (height/square feet)
<b>Smell/Noise</b>	Setback distances from property line/adjacent
<b>Cruelty/Neglect/Abandonment</b>	Location in relation to living structures
<b>General welfare</b>	Chicken security from predators
	Termination and Processing
	Waste and sanitary conditions
	Feed storage/composting/manure

Animal Services Director Jessica Arias reported on the impact on Animal Services staff. She provided an overview of the evaluation of animal services staffing needs and addressed budgeting and position needs as it relates to Animal Services with the addition of backyard chickens. She asked for consideration of approval for a new position, not only to meet the current needs, but the extra responsibilities involved with appropriately having staff available to address enforcement and any other animal services needs.

Mr. Olmedo continued presenting on permitting and review of chicken coops associated with the proposed Ordinance. He provided an overview of the following:

### BACKYARD CHICKEN PERMITTING AND REVIEW

Chicken coop and enclosure structures will be submitted through the SmartGov portal and reviewed as an Accessory Structure. Planning will conduct a review of a submitted site plan to evaluate compliance to the UDO. Code Enforcement will conduct a site visit inspection to evaluate compliance to the UDO after the structures have been installed. It is anticipated that the chicken coop and enclosure will be less than 400 square feet. If they are greater than 400 square feet, then City Inspections will conduct review and site inspections for North Carolina Building Code compliance.

### BACKYARD CHICKEN PERMITS AND ASSOCIATED FEES

Chicken coop and enclosure will be processed as an Accessory Structure through the SmartGov portal and has a base review fee of \$52.00 (one-time fee). The follow table illustrates City’s that were found to have permits and associated fees.

City	Fee
<b>Asheville</b>	\$25.00 (annually)
<b>Cary</b>	\$50.00 (one-time)
<b>Charlotte</b>	\$40.00 (annually)

Council Member Butler inquired about consideration at this time with the current COVID challenges throughout the City and asked if it would be more prudent to table this until the City is through the COVID era and a better understanding of staffing is known so a situation isn’t created that the City isn’t able to manage.

Council Member Owen agreed on the staffing and inspections needs with implementation and concurred with the suggestion.

Council Member Butler commended City staff on the work created and the effort taken to respond to the request and report on the subject.

Mayor Baltutis asked Ms. Arias to elaborate on the personnel needs in Animal Services as it relates to the ordinance as well as the overall services from Animal Services.

Animal Services Director Jessica Arias responded and addressed several service needs in Animal Services and the benefit of having an additional officer regardless of whether the City moves forward with the backyard chicken ordinance.

Mayor Pro Tem Hykes commented on the issues being presented varying from animal services staffing needs, the timing of implementation, and the ask for backyard chickens in the City. She would like a better understanding of the lot size per chicken in the draft.

Mayor Baltutis responded those were good points, the public asked us, related to food security during the pandemic, to consider the fowl ordinance and he believes this is a pandemic appropriate topic for our Council to be evaluating.

Council Member Ward inquired if a food insecurity was identified as an issue or problem in the community in the survey. He commented on the budget concerns inherent of this and timing during COVID and agreed it is concerning as mentioned by other Council Members.

Community Engagement Manager Morgan Lasater responded some responses mentioned being excited about a source of food but was not the majority of the comments. She noted City Council may have heard that more individually.

Council Member Owen commented on the termination and procession language in the draft ordinance and inquired if the structure needs to be enclosed.

Mr. Olmedo responded the intent is to be a nonpublic area where the termination process could be handled in an enclosed structure.

Mayor Baltutis commented the termination process in the manner of this ordinance draft would be more so to address when chickens come to the end of their life in an urban setting.

Mr. Olmedo responded staff could simplify the language if needed to be sure the termination process is better understood.

Mayor Baltutis asked for additional information on dog runs, he stated he preferred the removal of setbacks to allow the freedom of our residents to do the placement of that and believes that is achieved with the back wall verbiage and the separation from primary structure that requires the coop to be closer to the resident primary structure than their neighbors.

Council Member inquired about the impact on staffing in Code Enforcement.

Mr. Olmedo responded through discussion with Chief Code Enforcement Officer, Chris Marland, about staffing for the additional services, it was determined Code Enforcement should be able to handle the additional services for enforcement. He explained Code Enforcement staff would work along with Animal Services and hopefully can address issues on the front end through the permitting process.

City Manager Watkins commented on the projected number of interested residents indicated that number may be small enough to not require a fee charge associated with the permitting process.

Council Member Owen commented on the process in which chickens will be permitted and inquired if there is a plan in place for coordinating the collection of chickens until permitting is properly received should residents start getting chickens and installing coops before the proper permitting is applied for.

Ms. Arias responded Code Enforcement would manage those requests, where Animal Services will focus more on the prohibited types, such as roosters, or animal welfare. She stated if Animal Services were contacted, the resident would be referred to Planning and Inspections to evaluate whether permitting is in place or can be done so retroactively.

Mr. Olmedo responded customer service would be the intent to get residents in compliance under the City Ordinance.

Mayor Baltutis asked to conduct a public hearing to seek input from the general public in at some time in January.

Following discussion, City Council consensus was to schedule a public hearing following the Planning and Zoning to seek a recommendation at their meeting in January with a anticipated date of scheduling a public hearing for the February 16, 2021, City Council Meeting.

#### **F) Special Meeting Discussion – State Delegation**

Assistant City Manager Rachel Kelly presented a recommendation to City Council to host a Special Meeting in January with the members of our State delegation. She reported the delegates return to session on January 13<sup>th</sup> and asked City Council to find an amenable date to invite them to a Special Meeting for introductions and an overview from City staff of ongoing City projects and priorities as well as discussion about the City's priorities.

Following a brief discussion, consensus was for City staff to proceed with invitations to State delegation to seek a date prior to January 13<sup>th</sup> for a virtual Special Meeting.

#### **G) Review of Responses to the Coronavirus in other NC Cities**

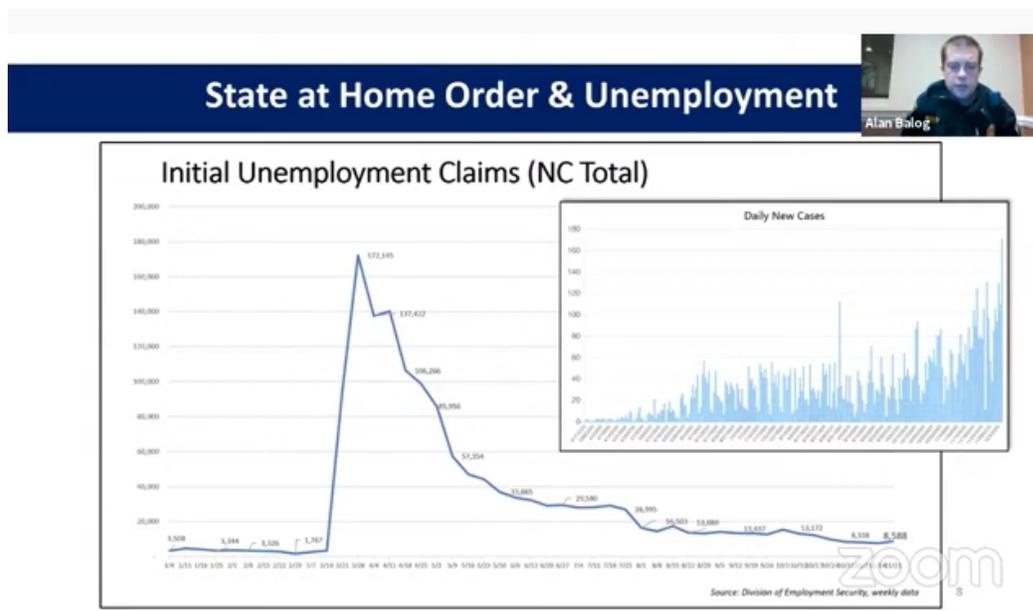
City Manager Watkins reported some Council Members have requested a report on what other cities have done in response to the ongoing pandemic and introduced Lieutenant Balog, who is leading that effort.

Lieutenant Alan Balog, Burlington Police Department, presented an overview of area responses, business partnerships, and masks distribution efforts. He reported Alamance County is currently experiencing critical community spread. He provided an overview of other area municipal state of emergency orders where some include alcohol and curfew requirements. He noted some have Resolutions reaffirming Executive Orders in place with specific interest on face masks, emergency maximum occupancy, emphasis on education, voluntary compliance, and enforcement of N.C. executive orders as last resort. He reported on Durham’s public/private partnership to educate and gain voluntary compliance, searchable database of businesses that have completed health and safety checklist, personal safety recommendations and development of social contract.

Mr. Balog reported on local efforts including Count on Me NC, where many Burlington businesses are participants and Alamance Chambers Commitments for Open & Safe efforts throughout the community. He reported the City of Burlington hosted several well-organized mask distributions to help out in the community with a total of 13,000 masks distributed with ongoing distribution every Tuesday at Farmer’s Market.

Community Engagement Manager Morgan Lasater provided an overview of the efforts in Communications. She reported the City has produced public service announcement on the PEG TV channel, bi-weekly residential email, social channels with daily posts, and City Works communication to 25,500 households. She reported messaging was released by City Council Members to the community to express appreciation and promote getting around safely. She reported signage placed throughout City parks has been helpful in messaging. She reported communication efforts were made at multifamily housing locations to distribute handouts and supplies where we saw a need.

Mr. Balog pointed out the following information which explains how severe restrictions resulted in an increase in unemployment with the many closings during stay at home orders and identifies the importance on safety measures in place with the current openings and maintaining of business in the community.



City Manager Watkins addressed the concerns and requested City Council feedback on guidance to consider adopting a Resolution with local emphasis.

Council Member Owen commented his intent was to put together a strong Resolution that backs what the City is doing and what the Governor has put forth to include in the marketing efforts to reach as many people as we can.

Following brief discussion, Council consensus was to have City staff draft a proposed Resolution for City Council to consider at its December 8, 2020, City Council Meeting.

#### **H) Boards and Commissions Reports**

- Planning and Zoning Commission - None

##### Traffic Commission – 1 Recommendation:

Director of Planning and Transportation Mike Nunn presented on a Traffic Commission recommendation for the following amendments to the City of Burlington Traffic Ordinance:

- 1) Install stop signs at 29 unsignalized intersections currently operating under two-way stop conditions with no stop sign in the field.

He reported the Traffic Commission met on November 12, 2020 and unanimously recommends the amendments. He reported City Council will consider this amendment at its December 8, 2020 City Council Meeting.

- Public Transit Advisory Commission (PTAC) - None

#### **I) City Manager Report**

Mayor Baltutis called for discussion on Council Composition and Charter and asked for City Council feedback about process. He called on Council Member Ward to discuss a previous suggestion for consideration of expanding the City Council and considering wards or districts. He stated he had some concerns following the last election and personal concerns on the expense to the City to hold a primary and having a second similar ballot. He asked for City staff to report to City Council on the cost of our current election process as we go into 2021, being an election year for our City government, and asked for City Council discussion to Council Member Ward's original request from years ago of considering some Charter changes.

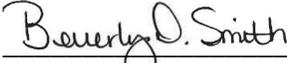
Council Member Ward responded he is open to the discussion on the expansion of City Council to seven members as he expressed in the past and believes it's worthwhile looking into. He suggested staff put together something for future discussions.

Council Member Butler responded he would like to include going over a Ward System simultaneously if having that discussion.

Following a brief discussion, Council consensus was for City staff report back to City Council on what similar populations in peer group communities are currently doing, provide information on Ward Systems, Council Member seats, and electoral process in those Charters to determine subsequent conversations with a Work Session check in possibly in March 2021.

City Manager Watkins responded he would coordinate with City Attorney on a report to City Council for further discussion in the near future.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35pm.

  
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Beverly D. Smith, NCCMC  
Interim City Clerk

December 7, 2020  
Work Session