



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Chaired by Mayor Pro Tem Chris Williams
Members: Williams, Hudson, Jefferson, and Johnson
June 7, 2022 – 4:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Chris Williams called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. Following roll call, the following attendance by Committee Members was duly noted.

Present (3): Chairman Chris Williams, and Committee Member Cyril Jefferson; and Committee Member Tyrone Johnson

Absent (1): Committee Member Wesley Hudson [Remote Participation]

Staff Present:

Greg Ferguson, Assistant City Manager; Eric Olmedo, Assistant City Manager; Jeron Hollis, Managing Director; Jelani Biggs, DEI Officer; Michell McNair, Manager-Development & Housing Department; Meghan Maguire, Assistant City Attorney; Megan Scales, Community Resource Specialist; and Mary S. Brooks, Deputy City Clerk

Also Present:

Crystal Mercer, County Extension Agent for Community and School Gardens; Cheri Neal, Continuum of Care Program Manager; and Jakki and Corvin Davis-D-UP, Co-Founders

The following documents associated with the presentations, are hereby attached as a permanent part of these proceedings:

- 1. PPP-Community Gardens Update*
- 2. PPP-VITA 2021 Update*
- 3. PPP-Washington Street Enhancement Project*

PRESENTATION OF ITEMS

2022-285 Update-The Community Gardens, High Point

Crystal Mercer, County Extension Agent for Community and School Gardens, will provide an update on the Community and School Gardens in the High Point Community from January 1-April 30, 2022.

Crystal Mercer, County Extension Agent for Community and School Gardens extended greetings; and thanked staff for their efforts. Ms. Mercer made a PowerPoint Presentation (PPP) regarding an update on the Community and School Gardens in the High Point Community from January 1 through April 30, 2022; there were six grants received totaling \$453.86; gave an overview of the 43 Community Gardens in High Point; spoke to the new garden startups; special events (Seeds to Share-donation from the Seeds Program International, and High Point University-over 120 HPU students volunteered); explained how the Second Harvest Food Bank served the community; spoke to the High Point Community Gardens site visits; outlined the results for the April 2022 monthly report for the Visit NC Farms (VNCF) App that included 1,135 downloads, 8,638 users, and 3,450 push notifications opens; said that there were free seeds distributed for 21 High Point Recipients; spoke to her affiliation with the Greater High Point Food Alliance; discussed the 2022 Program Priorities which are: support community garden leaders, update city of High Point Gardens website, and collaborate with the GHPFA to update information for the community resource guide in High Point, Greensboro, and surrounding communities; and concluded with a list of 2022 upcoming event pending any questions.

Chairman Williams thanked Ms. Mercer for her efforts; and inquired on the Teaching Gardens classes for adults and the youth. Ms. Mercer said that the Teaching Gardens classes were for adults and the youth; and explained how the education process worked.

Committee Member Jefferson thanked Ms. Mercer for her hard work and efforts; and voiced the importance that the community food security being a collaborative effort.

Chairman Williams asked Ms. Mercer to provide the cost to fund the Community Garden School Programs. Ms. Mercer replied that she would be providing that information

2022-287 Update-2021 Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Update

The Community and Neighborhood Development Division will provide an update on the results of the VITA tax season.

Megan Scales, Community Resource Specialist; made a PPP regarding the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program-2021-2022 tax season; explained what the VITA Program provided; said that the Program provided free basic tax returns to households with low to moderate income (\$57,000 or less); the Program operated on an \$8,000 budget for personnel, supplies, and miscellaneous expenses; six out of the eight VITA sites were located in the core city; outlined the tax season results as followed:

- *Total Volunteers: 9 greeters, 2 schedulers, 30 tax preparers, 6 site supervisors*
- *Total Volunteer Hours: 1,919*
- *Total Tax Preparation hours: 1,006*
- *VITA hours of operation: 389*
- *Total federal and state tax returns: 797*
- *Total federal refunds issues \$998,043*
- *Average taxpayer AGI: \$24,715*
- *Primary or secondary taxpayer age 60+: 595*
- *Rural taxpayers: 54*
- *Individuals with disabilities: 12*
- *IRS audit with no findings*

Ms. Scales continued discussion regarding the Program's cost benefits; provided data from the years 2006 to 2021; and spoke to the site supervisor satisfaction rate; and entertained questions.

Chairman Williams thanked the staff and volunteers for their efforts in serving the community.

2022-286 Update-Homeless Services-Guilford County Continuum of Care

Staff and Officers of the Guilford County Continuum of Care will provide an update on Homeless Services.

Sheri Neal, CoC Program Manager extended greetings; thanked everyone for their time; said that Dr. Palmer was unable to make today's meeting; provided an update regarding Homeless Services; said that four listening sessions were completed, and that they were now working on community surveys; the analysis would be completed around September; voiced the need to address homelessness; spoke to collaborating with the county; introduced Guilford County's Assistant Manager for Successful People, Victor Isler; and entertained questions.

Chairman Williams voiced concerns regarding the impact that the cost-of-living increase had; and thanked everyone for their time and efforts.

2022-284 Presentation-Washington Street Enhancement Project

D-UP (Jakki and Corvin Davis-co-founders) will give a presentation on the Washington Street Enhancement Project.

Jakki Davis, D-UP Executive Director extended greetings; made a PPP regarding the Washington Street Enhancement Project (Project); said that a feasibility study was completed in May; spoke to the positive feedback from the community; provided a brief history on D-UP, Inc.; spoke to the opportunity to partnership with the city; said that the Project would be a catalyst in the revitalization of the Historic Washington Street and further support the D-UP expansion goal; the goal and plan was to invest \$13 million for a future Black Box Theatre; explained the fundraising strategies for sustainability; discussed the comprehensive capital campaign plan that included four phases to include having the properties located at 621 and 627 Washington Street conveyed; D-Up's mission was to provide comprehensive wraparound services for the community; spoke to the collaborative efforts with the community/agencies; recognized individuals in attendance that supported D-Up; to having a positive economic impact; and requested that the city of High Point conveyed the two properties located on 621 and 627 Washington Street for public purposes.

Committee Member Jefferson thanked Ms. Davis for her efforts; and voiced the importance of retaining the Washington Street history.

Meghan Maguire, Assistant City Attorney advised that staff would need to have further discussion regarding said request to determine which state statute to convey the property under.

Committee Member Jefferson moved to direct the appropriate staff to look into the conveyance method for properties located at 621 & 627 Washington Street for public use. Committee Member Johnson made a second to the motion. Following a roll call vote by Chairman Williams, the motion carried by the following 3-0 unanimous vote:

Aye (3): Chairman Williams, Committee Member Jefferson, Committee Member Johnson

Aye (1): Committee Member Hudson

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Christopher Williams, Chairman

Attest:

Mary S. Brooks, CMC
Deputy City Clerk