

**HIGH POINT CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
May 2, 2018 – 3:30 P.M.
3RD FLOOR LOBBY CONFERENCE ROOM**

MINUTES

Present:

Mayor Pro Tem Chris Williams (Ward 2); Don Scarborough, At Large; Jeff Golden (Ward 1) Monica Peters (Ward 3); Wesley Hudson (Ward 4) Victor Jones (Ward 5); Jason Ewing (Ward 6) [Arrived at 3:42]

Absent:

Mayor Jay Wagner; and Council Members Britt Moore, At Large

Staff Present:

Greg Demko, City Manager; Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager; Randy Hemann, Assistant City Manager; Reggie Hucks, Inspections Administrator; Mark McDonald, Transportation Director; Greg Venable, Transportation Planner; Angela Wynes, Transit Manager Assistant; Laura Altizer, Senior Budget Analyst; Roslyn McNeill, Budget Analyst; Lisa Vierling, City Clerk and Sandra Keeney, Deputy City Clerk

Others: Ken Delount

News Media:

No News Media Present

Note: The following presentations will be attached and incorporated as a permanent part of these proceedings.

- ✓ Transportation & Transit Services– PowerPoint (**Exhibit Book, Volume XIII, Page 9**)
- ✓ Building Inspections – PowerPoint (**Exhibit Book, Volume XIII, Page 10**)

Mayor Pro Tem Chris Williams called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. and introduced Greg Demko, City Manager.

Mr. Demko stated this is the last of the Department Presentations until Budget Review and introduced Mark McDonald, Transportation Director.

Transportation & Transit Presentation

Mr. McDonald thanked the Council for the opportunity to present how the department is structured and what they do, as well as explain current and upcoming projects. He recited the Mission Statement “Provide a safe, efficient, economical and environmentally sensitive transportation network that serves the best interest of our citizens.” He stated the priorities of the department are:

1. Improve Safety
2. Manage Congestion
3. Enhance the Quality of Life
4. Foster Economic Growth

He listed the Divisions of the Transportation Department: Administration & Engineering, Signs & Markings, Traffic Signals, System Operations, Parking, Transportation Planning and Transit. He stated the department consist of 80 employees and that more than half of those employees are in the High Point Transit System. He said the plan is to increase the staff of the Transit System with additional drivers, and other staff that is necessary to extend operating hours. The operating and capital budget is about \$10 million annually and it fluctuates from year to year. He listed the roles of the Administration & Engineering staff which are: Respond to public concerns, Program and policy management, Collect and evaluate traffic data used for safety and operational improvements, Oversee the design and operation of transportation systems and facilities, Technical support to other divisions, and Coordination with City departments, and NCDOT. He stated his staff works closely with Engineering and Design to do some design and manage projects once they get to a construction stage.

He explained the two operational divisions for traffic at the R.V. Moss Center and noted the facility was named after a past Transportation Director. He stated the Signs & Marketing Division handles design, fabricate, and install traffic signing; lay out and install all pavement markings; traffic control for all special events, and work zone support for other departments.

He said Traffic Signals Division handles maintenance for a total of 250 devices, and most of those are traffic signals but include school zone flashers and intersection beacons. 85% of those traffic signals belong to the State of North Carolina and is maintained under an agreement with the State and reimbursed quarterly for materials and effort regarding the maintenance that is performed. He stated there are similar agreements for signs and pavement markings on state roads. He said this division also maintains the lighting and equipment at parking decks, Depot and MTT as well as performs traffic control support for special events.

He stated the Signal System Operations are located on the 1st floor of the Municipal Building and the employees operate the traffic signals and evaluate the timings and monitor traffic on the major corridors on a daily basis, particularly during special events. Currently there are 37 traffic cameras with the anticipation of an expansion and upgrade to 50 cameras. Mayor Pro Tem Williams asked if the videos are retained and stored. Mr. McDonald responded there is a DVR that records everything that is seen according to the angles of the cameras. There is a 5 to 7-day rollover. He noted they work with the Police Department as well as other departments if the cameras have useful information.

He explained the role of the Parking employees which operates two parking decks, Parking Plaza and Broad Street and noted that Broad street was closed except during Market and an occasional special event. Council Member Hudson asked if there would be shuttle service from Broad Street. Mr. McDonald stated that it is something the ball team could provide. Mr. McDonald stated between the two decks there are about 950 spaces. Randy McCaslin stated the City also owns the parking deck at the old Radisson and has it leased. He noted that all three parking decks are paid

for. Council Member Hudson asked if it was leased to the hotel. Mr. McDonald stated yes, the hotel deck on Main Street is leased to the hotel. He stated the parking staff also oversees general maintenance and operational details around the Depot. He stated the Train Depot was restored in 2004 and pointed out the transit terminal is directly across the train tracks from the Depot.

Mr. McDonald introduced Greg Venable, Transportation Planner, to speak regarding the MPO.

Mr. Venable stated an MPO is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and it is one of 19 across the state. He stated High Point is designated as the lead planning agency for the MPO meaning all the funding received from the Federal Government comes through the state and then to High Point. He stated they are responsible for all transportation planning programs in the urban area and the area is defined by the Census and is updated every 10 years. They identify, evaluate, and document future transportation needs and seek state and federal project funding. He stated they also promote the development of a multi-modal transportation system which includes highways, transit, rail and bike-ped. He showed a map of the High Point MPO and stated the department is responsible for traffic planning to include 8 cities and towns, 4 counties, and 3 NCDOT Divisions. He stated it is comprised of a 15 Member Board and noted Mayor Wagner is the representative from High Point as well as the Vice Chair. He stated the MPO covers approximately 700 square miles. He explained in looking at the map and noting the MPO is urbanized it is obvious that not all areas are urbanized. Lexington during the last census became urbanized and as result requested to be a member of High Points MPO, which explains why the boundary takes up most of Davidson County. The northern part of Davidson County is part of Winston-Salem's MPO. The 15 Member Board includes 3 NCDOT Division Board Members and High Point is in 3 divisions: Division 7 which is Guilford County, Division 8 which covers Randolph County and Division 9 covers Davidson County.

He explained the MPO budget for this year noting it is \$580,000 and it's an 80/20 match which means 80% is received from the Federal Government and the MPO matches the other 20%. He stated each member jurisdiction pays a share of the local match based on population. High Point contributes approximately \$37,000 annually. A portion of the MPO budget, \$19,000 is allocated to the Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART) for transportation planning activities.

He shared Planning Documents that were created with MPO funds including a Multi-modal plan, which covers the downtown area, some recommendations out of that plan covers streetscape improvements for the ball park. He stated the Pedestrian plan is complete, and the Regional Bike Plan should take about a year and a half to complete. Council Member Peters asked when will the public start seeing some bike lanes. Mr. Venable stated there have been some bike lanes completed recently due to resurfacing, but overall it will be about a year. There will be an opportunity for public involvement and they will hold several public meetings. Council Member Hudson asked if Southwest renewal is included in this plan? Mr. Venable stated they work closely with Dorothy Darr and she could apply for a grant to get some of the Multi-Modal Vision Plan, which is all included. What she's done is include it in the long-range plan. There is a push to update the Greenway Master Plan which will take place over the next six months and that will be included as part as the document as well.

Randy McCaslin noted there is a difference between planning and construction funds. Mr. Venable stated the budget he presented is all planning funds there are no construction funds. He stated they were able to get the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality funding and those are construction funds. There are projects such as bike ped projects and greenway projects that we can submit to the state to get construction funds but for now I'm speaking of planning funds. Council Member Peters asked if any of the phases of the Southwest Greenway are implemented in this. Mr. Venable stated it is mentioned in there. Mr. McCaslin stated there is no funding in there, the City or the Southwest has got to find a funding source. Randy Hemann, Assistant City Manager, said he believed it would be a part of the Parks & Recreation plan. Mr. Demko stated they are doing the Master Plan for Parks and Trails and it will be incorporated in that.

Mr. McDonald introduced Angela Wynes, Transit Manager Assistant, to present regarding the High Point Transit System.

Ms. Wynes stated the City operates fixed routes throughout the city, and provides 3,500 passenger trips each weekday and 1,400 each Saturday. She explained a passenger trip is not one individual, but that it could be one individual making several different trips a day. She stated trips are counted, not individual's passengers, and that is how the ridership is accounted and reported to Federal Transit and to NCDOT and they in turn provide funding based on those numbers. Regular fare is \$1.00 and by law they are required to offer half fare for elderly, disabled, and Medicare cardholders. There is a local connection for PART service to other Triad communities such as Greensboro and Winston-Salem etc. She explained the Accessnow which provides door-to-door, on demand service for the elderly (70+) and disabled who are unable to use the bus. One-way Access fare is \$2.00. She noted all buses are accessible and equipped for the disabled. Mr. McCaslin asked what the average trip cost? Ms. Wynes responded that the average trip cost per passenger is \$3.75 and the passenger is paying \$1.00. Mr. McCaslin asked about the cost of Paratransit. Ms. Wynes responded the passenger is paying \$2.00 and the cost of the trip is \$18.00. She stated she encourages people to ride the bus. There is a thorough screening process to allow passengers to use the Paratransit system.

She shared pictures of the High Point Transit Terminal and stated the goal was to blend in with the Depot. She stated High Point Transit operates six days a week. Currently there are 12 weekday routes that serve more than 500 bus stops and cover over 1,700 miles daily. There are 10 Saturday routes. The transit covers about 1/3 of the City area and average operational costs is \$78.00 per hour. The annual operating budget is \$3.3 million, comprised of 40% Federal, 20% State, 20% City, and 20% farebox funding. She stated the Capital budget averages about \$240,000 annually, that does not include the years there is need to replace a portion of the fleet which is about 15 years. She said every 10 years money is set aside, and over a 5-year period, a local match will help to make that purchase.

Council Member Peters asked what are the hours the buses run on the six days. Ms. Wynes responded Monday-Friday is 5:45 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. for the fix route service. To extend service a little later to match the initial PART hours there is a guarantee ride home service which is at 6:00 p.m., 6:30 p.m., and 7:00 p.m. Saturday service is 8:45 a.m. until 5:15 p.m. Council Member Ewing asked since PART extended their hours to 9:00 p.m. has that affected our demand? Ms. Wynes stated she thinks it does, but once the service is expanded this summer, it will change. Mayor Pro

Temp asked what will the new hours be this summer. Ms. Wynes replied the last bus will pull in at 9:45 p.m. this will give the information needed as far as demand is concerned. Mayor Pro Tem asked what steps are being taken to get the information to the public regarding later summer hours. Ms. Wynes stated maps and displays will be set up in the lobby, terminals, library, the transportation department and information posted on the website, all the social media outlets and will work with Public Information regarding press releases. Council Member Jones asked what the passenger count is on the buses. Ms. Wynes stated 32 people per bus. Council Member Jones asked if there is still need for drivers. Ms. Wynes stated yes, that is correct. Council Member Ewing asked how competitive is the pay verses PART, Winston-Salem and Greensboro. Ms. Wynes answered High Point pays more than PART, but does not pay more than Winston-Salem and Greensboro. Council Member Golden asked if the City has ever considered having a commercial trail way such as Grey Hound. Ms. Wynes responded it was considered but with the issues that Winston-Salem and Greensboro were having they decided against it. Mayor Pro Tem Williams asked if that included Mega Bus. Ms. Wynes stated Mega Bus has not been considered.

Ms. Wynes stated in 2015 the Short-Range Transit Plan was completed and implemented. There were several branding projects that were completed which included a new logo, new paint schemes and a new name. She stated they have implemented bus advertising which is doing well. She spoke about the Palladium Circulator and creating a shorter route for that to increase ridership. She stated they will work with staff and departments to make the public aware of the Palladium Circulator service. She gave an overview of new services beginning in August which include: Route Restructuring, increasing hourly service to GTCC Jamestown campus, service until 9:45 p.m., 2 hours additional service hours on Saturday and increase the fare to \$1.25. She stated there are plans to create 13 additional positions.

She showed a map of the transit route coverage and noted that some existing bus routes will be extended. She explained capital improvements which include renovations to the Paratransit facility, Palladium Area Transfer facility and bus stop amenity pilot projects.

Mark McDonald gave an update and list of current projects:

1. Skeet Club Road Widening
2. Traffic Signal System Upgrades
3. Safe Routes to Schools
4. Sidewalks
5. Parking Deck Improvements
6. Mendenhall Terminal Upgrades
7. Traffic Service Storage Building
8. Intersection Improvements (N. Main & Lexington, Centennial & Montlieu, Eastchester & Regency)

He gave an overview and update on future projects including: I-74 & NC 68 Interchange Improvements, Jamestown Bypass, Johnson Street – Sandy Ridge Road Improvements, Eastchester Drive widening, I-85 Business & S. Main Street Bridge Replacement and Interchange Improvements and E. Lexington Avenue Gateway. He listed potential bond projects: Triangle Lake Road, Washington Street Realignment, Burton Road, Gordon Street, E. Ward Avenue

Extension, Braddock Road, English & MLK conversions and intersection and unpaved street improvements. Council Member Ewing asked if the current lists and updates are on the website. Mr. McDonald stated some are up to date, however, there may be some that need to be updated.

Building Inspections Presentation

Mr. Demko introduced Reggie Hucks, Inspections Administrator.

Mr. Hucks stated since 2016 there have been ten new showrooms which are either substantial additions to existing showrooms or are brand new showrooms. He stated there is a difference between local codes and state building codes. He said his department enforces the State Building Code. There is language in State Building Code regarding demolitions of residential structures, but his department generally lets local code enforcement handle residential code violations. This sometimes confuses the public. He stated his department handles commercial demolitions, and noted there would be a commercial demolition coming soon on English street.

He listed different codes that his department enforces such as: Building Codes, Existing Building Codes, Plumbing Codes, Mechanical Codes, ADA Codes, and Electrical Codes. Mr. McCaslin pointed out that the department does not write the codes or have any say in the codes. They strictly enforce the codes. Mr. Hucks stated there are big changes coming from the Building Code Council and the Legislature. He stated in High Point there is a lot of commercial construction. One of the complaints received was in regard to the time it took to get a commercial project through the system. He stated his department has worked hard to reduce that time. There were a number of things implemented to reduce that time such as looking at what was causing the back log and restructure of the work flow. He stated the time it takes to issue a permit has been reduced from 3 weeks to a week and one day. Instead of waiting to get a perfect document, they will issue a foundation permit so the builders can start construction. He stated the goal of the inspections department is to review a set of drawings in three days and either give a good set of comments or issue the permit.

He showed pictures of work regarding High Point University Congdon Health Science building, and stated with the new Arena breaking ground in June or July, the new ball stadium, new show rooms, as well as new restaurants it is an exciting time to be in High Point and there is a lot of work to be done.

He stated with new and existing showrooms he hopes to be able to issue a permit within two hours of submission. He explained in order to make that happen they created an Expedited Show Room Permit. Inspections are performed in the field as opposed to being in an office. He said although there are still problems with people operating show rooms without permits, he feels with an easier system in place for permits, as well as better policing of show rooms, the show room permits should increase.

He showed a picture of a commercial building needing demolished and stated it was a challenge to go through the steps required to have a commercial building demolished. He stated there are others in town like this and they need to be dealt with because of safety issues, however, they do work with the owners to try to get them to repair the building.

He encourages all Inspectors to become multi-certified, and listed some of the Inspections Service initiatives such as:

1. Expedited Showroom Permits
2. Improved Plan Review Workflow
3. Field Meetings with Customers
4. Multi-Certification of Inspection Staff
5. Improved Reporting
6. iPad Implementation
7. Monthly full staff meetings – some with guest presenters

The following are statistics from the Inspection Services during 2017:

1. Number of commercial permits issued – 1200
2. Number of residential permits issued – 2000
3. Number of expedited showroom permits issued – 160 (3 markets)
4. Number of new showrooms built August since 2016 – 9
5. Number of inspections made during 2017 – 24,125

He showed a picture of the Inspection Staff and stated there are two positions that are vacant. He said the Inspection staff works hard and he is very proud of the what they have accomplished and feels everyone works as a team.

Mr. Demko asked if a level 3 Electrical Inspector is needed. Mr. Hucks responded we need an Electrical and Plumbing Inspector now and a Level 3 Electrical Inspector really bad.

Council Member Hudson stated he was pleased that residential permits are now available online. Mayor Pro Tem Williams concurred.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m. upon motion duly made and seconded.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chris Williams, Mayor Pro Tem

Attest:

Sandra Keeney, Deputy City Clerk