

A Regular Meeting of the City Council of the City of Hickory was held in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Building on Tuesday, March 5, 2024, at 6:00 p.m., with the following members present:

Tony Wood	Hank Guess	Anthony Freeman
Charlotte C. Williams	Aldermen	David P. Zagaroli
Danny Seaver		Jill Patton

A quorum was present.

Also present were City Manager Warren Wood, Deputy City Manager Rodney Miller, Assistant City Manager Rick Beasley, Assistant City Manager Yaidee Fox, Deputy City Attorney Arnita Dula, City Attorney Timothy Swanson, Deputy City Clerk Crystal B. Mundy, and City Clerk Debbie D. Miller

- I. Mayor Guess called the meeting to order. All Council members were present with the arrival of Alderman Seaver at 6:02 p.m.
- II. Invocation by Reverend Cassandra Rawls, Hartzell Memorial United Methodist Church
- III. Pledge of Allegiance
- IV. Special Presentations
- V. Persons Requesting to Be Heard

- A. Mr. Michael Anise, 2764 Pleasant Road, Fort Mill, SC 29708, to Discuss Denial of Replacing a Mobile Home due to a Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Michael Anise, 2764 Pleasant Road, Fort Mill, SC, advised he owns a manufactured housing property in Hickory. His company owned about 3,000 manufactured housing homesites throughout the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. Their mission was to preserve and improve affordable housing for folks. He was extremely disappointed by Council's actions, and decisions to pass a law not allowing himself or other community owners to put a mobile home on a vacant lot that had been vacant for more than 60 days. They have a mobile home community in Hickory that had a vacant lot. He had a homeowner that wanted to buy a brand-new home from a home dealership and put that home on his property at the mobile home park. They were denied the permit because there was some law that was passed in December of 2023, just a couple of months ago, prohibiting the infill of any vacant lots. He did not think that was right. He did not think that it was fair. He thought they were doing an injustice and a disservice to the citizens by pushing out affordable housing. This was not what their mission should be about. There were a lot of hardworking folks that could not afford rent these days and there was limited affordable housing in their area as many other cities throughout the US. He was calling on Council to please allow either him a variance to fill his empty vacant lot or at least send a proper notice and allow folks the opportunity to fill in their vacant lot instead of just surprising them with this law. It had taken revenues away from his property. As a property owner, he had bought and invested in this town, and this had taken away affordable housing from folks that really needed it. He did not understand, why on God's green earth, they would approve something like that. What was the real motivation behind it when everyone was crying for affordable housing, and they were trying to take that away from folks. He was told they could not respond to him, whatever, he was letting them know his peace of mind, and he was sure a lot of mobile homeowners throughout the State and the Country would feel the same way. It was not fair they were trying to push out manufactured housing properties. They were trying to change the stigma by doing it right. They were professionally managing those communities, doing background checks on folks. His next step was to have his corporate attorney deal with the City Council's attorney to see if there was something that could be done about this unfairness.

Mayor Guess thanked Mr. Anise and advised he was welcome to make an appointment to see someone on staff in the Planning Commission, or their attorney or any of Council would make themselves available if he would like to have a conversation.

Mr. Anise commented that would be great. He inquired where to make the appointment.

Mayor Guess advised he could contact any of the Council and all their staff's numbers and emails were available on the website.

Mr. Anise thanked the Council.

Mayor Guess asked if there was anyone else that would like to address the Council. No one appeared.

- VI. Approval of Minutes

- A. Regular Meeting of February 20, 2024.

Alderwoman Patton moved, seconded by Alderwoman Williams that the Minutes of February 20, 2024, be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

- VII. Reaffirmation and Ratification of Second Readings. Votes recorded on first reading will be reaffirmed and ratified on second reading unless Council Members change their votes and so indicate on second reading.

Alderman Zagaroli moved, seconded by Alderwoman Patton that the following be reaffirmed and ratified on second reading. The motion carried unanimously.

- A. Approval of the Implementation of a Speed Limit Reduction to 25 mph along 5th Avenue NE between Main Avenue NE and 5th Avenue Place NE, and along 4th Street NE between 5th Avenue NE and 5th Avenue Place NE, and along 7th Street NE between 5th Avenue NE and 3rd Avenue NE. (First Reading Vote: Unanimous)
- B. Revised Budget Revision Number 14. (First Reading Vote: Unanimous)
- C. Budget Revision Number 15. (First Reading Vote: Unanimous)

- VIII. Consent Agenda: All items below will be enacted by vote of City Council. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council Member so requests. In which event, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered under Item IX.

Alderwoman Patton moved, seconded by Alderwoman Williams approval of the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

- A. Called for a Public Hearing to Consider the Voluntary Contiguous Annexation of 11.147-Acres Located at 2536 Startown Road, PIN 3721-1950-9129, Owned by Matthew Varney, and wife Yer Vang. (Authorized Public Hearing for March 19, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Julian G. Whitener Municipal Building).

RESOLUTION NO. 24-07

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE CLERK TO INVESTIGATE A PETITION RECEIVED UNDER G.S. 160A-31 AND/OR 160A-58.1, AS AMENDED

WHEREAS, a petition from Matthew Varney and wife Yer Vang requesting annexation of an area described in a petition was received on February 12, 2024, by the City Council of the City of Hickory; and

WHEREAS, G.S. 160A-31 and G.S. 160A-58.1 provide that the sufficiency of the petition shall be investigated by the Clerk before further annexation proceedings may take place; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Hickory deems it advisable to proceed in response to this request for annexation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HICKORY:

THAT, the Clerk is hereby directed to investigate the sufficiency of the above-described petition and to certify as soon as possible to the City Council the result of her investigation.

CERTIFICATE OF SUFFICIENCY

TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HICKORY, NORTH CAROLINA:

I, Debbie D. Miller, City Clerk, do hereby certify that I have investigated the petition attached hereto and have found as a fact that said petition is signed by all owners of real property lying in the area described therein, in accordance with G.S. 160A-31 and/or G.S. 160A-58.1, as amended:

Property of Matthew Varney and wife Yer Vang, containing 11.147-acres more or less, located at 2536 Startown Road, Newton, NC, and identified as PIN 3721-1950-9129.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the City of Hickory this 13th day of February, 2024.

/s/ Debbie D. Miller, City Clerk

RESOLUTION 24-08

RESOLUTION FIXING DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON QUESTION OF ANNEXATION, PURSUANT TO G.S. 160A-31 OR G.S. 160A-58.1, AS AMENDED

WHEREAS, a petition requesting annexation of the area described herein has been received; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Hickory has, by Resolution, directed the clerk to investigate the sufficiency thereof; and

WHEREAS, certification by the Clerk as to the sufficiency of said petition has been made.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HICKORY:

Section 1: That a public hearing on the question of annexation of the area described herein will be held at 6:00 p.m. on March 19, 2024, in the Council Chambers of the Julian G. Whitener Municipal Building, located at 76 North Center Street, Hickory, North Carolina.

Section 2: The area proposed for annexation is described as follows:

Property of Matthew Varney and wife Yer Vang, containing 11.147-acres more or less, located at 2536 Startown Road, Newton, and identified as PIN 3721-1950-9129.

Section 3: Notice of said public hearing shall be published in the Hickory Daily Record, a newspaper having general circulation in the City of Hickory, at least ten (10) days prior to the date of said public hearing.

RESOLUTION NO. 24-09

A RESOLUTION DETERMINING THE INTENT TO ANNEX INTO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF HICKORY CERTAIN PROPERTY OWNED BY MATTHEW VARNEY AND WIFE YER VANG AND CALLING FOR A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE SAME

WHEREAS, Matthew Varney and wife Yer Vang are the owners of certain real property as described herein, which property is located at 2536 Startown Road, Newton, NC and identified as PIN 3721-1950-9129, containing 11.147-acres more or less; and

WHEREAS, such property is currently located in the City's extra-territorial jurisdictional (ETJ); and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the health, safety, and well-being of the residents of the City of Hickory to annex such property into the corporate limits of the City of Hickory as authorized by N.C.G.S. Section 160A-31; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Hickory City Council, sitting in open session this 5th day of March, 2024, at a regularly scheduled meeting of the governing body of said Council, duly called and posted in accordance with the statutes of the State of North Carolina, as follows:

Section 1: That the Hickory City Council does determine that it is in the best interest of the health, safety, and well-being of the residents of the City of Hickory to annex the property described hereinafter into the corporate limits of the City of Hickory.

Section 2: That a public hearing on the question of annexation of the area described herein will be held at 6:00 p.m. on March 19, 2024, in the Council Chambers of the Julian G. Whitener Municipal Building, located at 76 North Center Street, Hickory, North Carolina.

Section 3: The same being that property reflected on map entitled Matthew Varney and Yer Vang, Voluntary Contiguous Annexation Map 1 Current City Boundary, subject property outlined in red; Matthew Varney and Yer Vang, Voluntary Contiguous Annexation Map 2, Current Zoning, subject property outlined in red; , Matthew Varney and Yer Vang, Voluntary Contiguous Annexation, Map 3, Aerial Photography, subject property outlined in red.

Section 4: Notice of said public hearing shall be published in The Hickory Daily Record, a newspaper having general circulation in the City of Hickory, at least ten (10) days prior to the date of said public hearing.

B. Approved a Cemetery Deed Transfer from Harold Dean Proctor and wife, Harriett Smith Proctor, and Rebecca Lea Proctor Ward and husband Richard Sterling Ward, to Rebecca Lea Proctor Ward and husband, Richard Sterling Ward, Oakwood Cemetery, Section 10,

Block F, Lot 1, Containing Eight Grave Sites, 1-8, (Grave Sites 1 and 2 are Occupied). (Prepared by Attorney John G. Fuller).

- C. Approved a Resolution to Declare Surplus 10,438 Discarded Library Items to be Given to the Friends of the Library to be Sold at the Friends “Corner Book Store” at Patrick Beaver Memorial Library and/or Special Book Sales.

The Friends of the Library collect donated books and other materials on an ongoing basis to be sold at seasonal book sales and/or the Corner Book Store, the proceeds from which provide funds for library programming and other special activities. For many years, the library has given the Friends materials that have been removed from the collection because they are out of date, in poor condition, or no longer needed to meet the collection development goals of the library. The sale of donated and discarded books is the primary fundraising activity of the Friends of the Library, and discarded library materials comprise a significant portion of their inventory. The sale of these items ultimately benefits the library and is an appropriate means of disposing of unneeded materials. The library requests that discarded library materials be declared surplus and given to the Friends of the Library for their use at the “Corner Book Store” and/or seasonal book sales.

Notice was advertised in a newspaper having general circulation in the Hickory area on February 24, 2024.

RESOLUTION NO. 24-10

A RESOLUTION OF THE HICKORY CITY COUNCIL
DECLARING SURPLUS LIBRARY MATERIALS AND
AUTHORIZING DONATION TO THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

WHEREAS, the Hickory Public Library declares a list of 10,438 discarded library materials which are out of date, in poor condition, or no longer needed to meet the collection development goals of the library; and

WHEREAS, the Library wishes to dispose of said property to The Friends of the Library. Books will be sold at the Friends “Corner Book Store” at Patrick Beaver Memorial Library and/or at special book sales.

WHEREAS, G.S. 160A-280 allows the city to donate to another governmental unit within the United States, or a nonprofit organization incorporated after advertising and Council approval.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Hickory, North Carolina:

SECTION 1. That authorization is given to the Hickory Public Library to dispose of the declared surplus in a manner serving the best interest of the City.

SECTION 2. This Resolution shall become effective upon adoption.

- D. Approved on First Reading Budget Revision Number 16

ORDINANCE NO. 24-09
BUDGET REVISION NUMBER 16

BE IT ORDAINED by the Governing Board of the City of Hickory that, pursuant to N.C. General Statutes 159.15 and 159.13.2, the following revision be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, and for the duration of the Project Ordinance noted herein.

SECTION 1. To amend the General Fund within the FY 2023-24 Budget Ordinance, the expenditures shall be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Culture & Recreation	5,359	-
Contingency	-	34,000
Other Financing Uses	34,000	-
TOTAL	39,359	34,000

To provide funding for the above, the General Fund revenues will be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Miscellaneous	5,359	-
TOTAL	5,359	-

SECTION 2. To amend the Water/Sewer Fund within the FY 2023-24 Budget Ordinance the expenditures shall be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Contingency	-	34,000
Other Financing Uses	34,000	-
TOTAL	34,000	34,000

SECTION 3. To amend the Stormwater Fund within the FY 2023-24 Budget Ordinance the expenditures shall be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Environmental Protection	68,000	-
TOTAL	68,000	-

To provide funding for the above, the Stormwater Fund revenues will be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Other Financing Sources	68,000	-
TOTAL	68,000	-

SECTION 4. To amend the CVCC Innovation Center (#700014) Capital Project Ordinance the expenditures shall be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
General Government	4,700,000	-
TOTAL	4,700,000	-

To provide funding for the above, the CVCC Innovation Center (#700014) revenues will be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Restricted Intergovernmental	3,000,000	-
Miscellaneous	1,700,000	-
TOTAL	4,700,000	-

SECTION 5. To amend the Trivium Corporate Center Project Enzyme (#B1B003) Capital Project Ordinance, the expenditures shall be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
General Capital Projects	-	240,000
TOTAL	-	240,000

To provide funding for the above, the Trivium Corporate Center Project Enzyme (#B1B003) revenues will be amended as follows:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	INCREASE	DECREASE
Restricted Intergovernmental	-	240,000
TOTAL	-	240,000

SECTION 6. Copies of the budget revision shall be furnished to the Clerk of the Governing Board, and to the City Manager (Budget Officer) and the Finance Officer for their direction.

IX. Items Removed from Consent Agenda – None

X. Informational Item

XI. New Business:

A. Public Hearings

B. Departmental Reports

1. Approved the Updates to the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program – Presented by Transportation & Engineering Manager, Caroline Kone.

Staff requests Council's approval to update the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program. City of Hickory Traffic Division staff has updated the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program policy after receiving comments from citizens and staff that have gone through the current traffic calming process. Traffic Division staff feel that it is time to update the policy that was last updated in January, 2019. The changes to the policy more clearly explain the policy and procedures than the

previous version. Traffic Division staff received comments from citizens who have participated in the current Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program policy. The updated policy has been reviewed by appropriate City of Hickory staff to consider their comments and concerns, including addressing Fire Code Section 503.4.1 which requires traffic calming devices to be approved by a fire code official. Changes to the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program include, removal of double yellow centerline and/or white edge lines; increased the required pavement width to 35 feet for on-street parking; added a statement allowing other traffic calming measures to be used at the discretion of the Traffic Engineer; changed minimum number of properties in favor of a speed limit reduction to 60%; changed the number of Council readings for measures other than speed limit reductions to one reading; added a statement clarifying that obstructions may be removed to allow proper line-of-sight for traffic calming measures. Staff recommends Council's approval of the updates to the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program.

City Manager Warren Wood asked the City's Transportation & Engineering Manager, Caroline Kone to the podium to present Council with updates to the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program.

Transportation & Engineering Manager Caroline Kone gave a PowerPoint presentation. She updated the Council on the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Policy. It had been five years since they updated it last. There had been more research that had come about, and they felt that it was time to update the policy. She explained the traffic calming process. They get the initiating signatures from the citizens. They had to get signatures from themselves and two other neighboring people on their road. It had to be homeowners. Once they get the application, they do their traffic study. That usually took about six to eight weeks, depending on what was already in the queue. Then based on the traffic study, it determined what it qualified for, whether it was speed limit reduction, all-way stop, whatever. Then they send them the petition. They created the petition for them because they determined the study area. It may be just their road, it may be their entire neighborhood, it may be other roads that access their road to get to their house. They have 60 days to get the petition back to them. After that they send it to the City Council. The Council does their thing and lets them know it passed. Then they implement it. If it was something simple like speed limit reduction or stop signs, they usually get those up within two weeks. Oftentimes it was within the same week that it had been approved. Once again, it depended on their current workload and the weather.

Ms. Kone discussed the changes that were made. Their speed limit reduction was the normal, easiest, quickest thing that they could do. And that was their first step when it came to traffic calming. They used to require 75% of the neighbors of the petition to sign. They dropped that down to 60% because they felt like people were more apt to sign something as simple as a speed limit reduction and it would help to get more signatures. They took out the double yellow center line and the white edge lines in neighborhoods. There was new conflicting research, and it did not make sense. Some research said that it makes the driver seem like the road was narrower, so they slow down. Other research showed that it was making the driver feel like this was their lane, and they could go as fast as they want. They knew there was going to be more research that comes out and it was going to still be conflicting, so they just removed that from the policy. The next one was marked on-street parking due to fire code in their planning, they had to increase the width of the pavement to allow for on-street parking. Fire code requires 26 feet clear for fire access routes. The City's Land Development Code stated that on-street parking must be 9 feet wide. They used to have it be 24 feet wide from face to curb to face to curb. But due to those numbers when you add them together, you must have 35 feet to clear the fire trucks and still allow for on-street parking. One thing they were excited to try, if anybody ever gets to this point, was to do the offset on-street parking. Instead of having parking all on one side of the road, what they would like to do was painted chicanes. You would stagger the on-street parking, so the cars must slow down to go through. It was not a hardscape, but there were no cars parked there and they could still drive normally down the road, but it does slow them down. There was a place in what used to be Trinity Square in Durham, they had that. That was where she first saw it. She referred to a photo on the PowerPoint and advised she thought it was in Wisconsin. She pointed out they have it out there and it does work. They also added a blurb in there about other traffic calming measures. As they know, there was more and more research out there to show different things that could be done. She referred to the photo on the PowerPoint and commented that they may recognize the flashy all-way stop sign that they put on Second Avenue SE. This thing had done wonders for the speed out there. People used to blow right through the stop sign. They went through the traffic calming policy. They did the 25 miles an hour speed limit. They came back a year later and they got the all-way stop sign. It still was not slowing people down.

People were blowing right through. They found red lights to go on the stop sign, put those up and people stopped. It was amazing. People stop for stop signs. They loved it.

Mayor Guess commented it was not the sign that says, drive like your children live here.

Ms. Kone commented that the funny thing was, that way had never been faster. You should just stay on the main road and go down to the signal at Lenoir-Rhyne (LR) and make a right. That way had always been faster. But people, they get in the habits, straight line, they think, but with the all-way stops she was starting to see the traffic numbers dropped on that road as well, which they liked because it was a neighborhood road. Some other things that they were hoping to try were these bulb outs. They helped to narrow down the roadway, mostly at the intersections to slow the people down. What they would do was leave a little bit of path in between the bulb outs and the curb so that they do not have to do major storm drain upgrades to make sure the water was still getting where it needs to go. You could then do pretty things like plantings and stuff like that to help make the neighborhood more friendly. Another thing they added was to alert property owners that they may have to trim some of their bushes and trees when they were putting the signs in the right of way. She referred to the PowerPoint and advised the photo was taken on 5th Street SE at 3rd Avenue SE. This one recently went through a traffic calming and made it to an all-way stop. The stop sign was very difficult to see because of the trees that were planted in the planting strip. They talked with the homeowner and let them know they had to do this. The homeowner signed the petition, so he was like, "yeah, I guess I kind of got to let this happen". He was not happy. And obviously they did not get to clear enough, but they would take what they could get because they wanted to keep citizens happy, too. It was their neighborhood. This put the blurb in there to let them know that sometimes they just got to cut your trees down. She was a firm believer if she cut one down, she wanted to put one back, maybe in a park instead of on the road.

Ms. Kone advised Council they took out two readings because it used to be they always required two readings for any traffic calming. The only one they were leaving at two readings was the speed limit reductions because that was an ordinance and those required two readings. They redid the sentence structure on one of the pages because it did not read right. Then they updated the contact information. She had a new traffic engineer that worked under her, and he was the go-to guy instead of the girl that used to work for her. She asked for any questions.

Alderman Seaver inquired about the 35 feet she had discussed, was that just for the City or was that something that was kind of like the State.

Ms. Kone advised the 26 feet was the fire code and that was Statewide. The 9 feet for the on-street parking was in the City's Land Development Code. The 26 plus the 9 was 35.

Alderman Seaver asked what if they wanted bike lanes, would that add more.

Ms. Kone advised bike lanes had a different standard. They could not gutter pans as part of bike lanes. And depending on which rulebook they were looking at, it could be 4 feet, it could be 5 feet for bike lanes. If they were adding bike lanes to that, she would go for the higher just because it was more room for the cyclist. She would want 5 feet. Then they would require at least 40 feet.

Alderwoman Williams asked if this was posted on the City's website somewhere.

Ms. Kone commented they had the previous one on there. First thing tomorrow morning they would update to the new one.

Alderman Wood asked what constitutes a fire route. Because it seemed like anything where there was a building would be a fire route.

Ms. Kone explained the fire department had a major run route map that they have a copy of. That was what was different than what she thought he was asking. There were major run routes, and on major run routes, it could never do anything vertical, like speed bumps or speed tables or anything like that. A fire route was just the route that a fire truck would take, whether it was in a parking lot, down a street, that needs to be that clear. Obviously, there was some stuff that was grandfathered in. But that was the newest.

Alderman Freeman commented a couple of months ago, there was a concerned citizen that reached out to him. He asked Ms. Kone about the process if there was 60% of those who signed the petition to get a change on a city road. He wanted to

know what the process was if they were looking to get some change on a State road.

Ms. Kone commented that it was not nearly as easy as the City's process. They would have to contact the Department of Transportation (DOT) for those. It usually had to go up to Raleigh and then back down. She did not know if they had a petition process. When they had tried to get speed limits reduced on their roads in the past, they worked with them. They had to get ordinances passed to reduce the speed limit. Then they take it up and they send it up to Raleigh and it comes back down. That was usually about a six-month process before the signs got put up. She honestly did not know what it took for a neighborhood road for DOT to get those reduced. She would be more than happy to help facilitate if he wanted to get that citizen to contact her.

Alderman Freeman thought they helped them out, but it sounds like that was a long process.

Ms. Kone advised she would find out, or at least ask.

Alderman Wood asked if the City could unilaterally change, do traffic calming measures, for example, on all the walks that they have, the pedestrian walks that were going through. Could they do that unilaterally or does it have to come from the citizens?

Ms. Kone advised anything that was like a speed limit reduction obviously had to be an ordinance change. They did something like that when City Walk first opened, where they reduced the speed limit. In the CBD, it was already 20. They reduced the speed limit on the edges between Lenoir-Rhyne and out to 9th Street. They reduced that to 25 because of City Walk. She imagined that was something they would probably try to mimic on the rest of the walks as they went. They already did it along the Old Lenoir Road.

City Manager Warren Wood commented they had gotten complaints about 4th Street there on the City Walk. The City Council could put traffic calming measures in, and they typically look to the traffic engineers for their recommendations on those. But they could do those unilaterally.

Alderman Patton asked if she had any comments from the public on this.

Ms. Kone advised every time they get the traffic calming back from the citizens, anytime they had made comments about it, for example, "it would be nice if they could" or, "man, that was really hard", they took that into consideration, and that was where they dropped it to the 60% instead of the 75% to help with that. She asked for any other questions?

City Manager Warren Wood mentioned that they had not had any specific comments on this. They might when someone does not want traffic calming and they may be upset with lowering the threshold.

Mayor Guess thanked Ms. Kone. He knew that traffic calming was something that helped all of them. Whether or not a neighborhood has access to these types of forms and websites and things like that certainly does help. Of course, it had to be updated from time to time. They appreciated all the work and everything that had been put into this and making sure that it was up to date and that people had access to the information. They appreciate that. He asked for a motion to approve the updates as presented to the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program.

Alderman Patton moved seconded by Alderman Zagaroli approval of the updates to the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Appointments to Boards and Commissions

COMMUNITY APPEARANCE COMMISSION

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)
At-Large (Outside City but within HRP) (Council Appoints)

VACANT

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)
Caucasian (Council Appoints) Cliff Moone Resigned
Other Minority (Council Appoints)
Other Minority (Council Appoints)
Other Minority (Council Appoints)

VACANT
VACANT
VACANT
VACANT

HICKORY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

(Term Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms With Unlimited Appointments) (Appointed by City Council)
Burke County Representative (Mayor Appoints with Recommendation from Burke County) VACANT

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)
Historic Properties Owner (Council Appoints) VACANT
Building Trades Profession (Council Appoints) VACANT

PUBLIC ART COMMISSION

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)
Ward 1 (Wood Appoints) William Richter Resigned 2-28-2024 VACANT

RECYCLING ADVISORY BOARD

(Terms Expiring 6-30; 3-Year Terms) (Appointed by City Council)
Ward 4 (Freeman Appoints) VACANT
Ward 6 (Patton Appoints) VACANT
At-Large (Council Appoints) VACANT
At-Large (Council Appoints) VACANT

Mayor Guess commented that they did not have many vacancies, but there were still a few. If there was something on there that they may be interested in, be sure and let Council know. Once again, the information pertaining to the Boards and Commissions was available on the City's website.

C. Presentation of Petitions and Requests

XII. Matters Not on Agenda (requires majority vote of Council to consider)

XIII. General Comments by Members of Council, City Manager or City Attorney of a Non-Business Nature

Mayor Guess commented long awaited and anticipated, one of the trails, Riverwalk, was very near to completion. The City was making the announcement that they were going to have the opening and the ribbon cutting at 10:30 a.m. on April 4, 2024. A little less than a month. They would be having a public opening and ribbon cutting for the Riverwalk. He invited everyone to come out and participate and to be part of that. He knew that everyone on Council had been asked for a while now when it was going to be. Now they know when it was going to be, April 4th at 10:30 a.m.

Mayor Guess mentioned and commended all the members of the Hickory Fire Department. Hickory Fire Department was now an Internationally Accredited Agency with the Commission on Fire Accreditation. They were 1 of 300 to achieve this status, and only 17 of those 300 were in the State of North Carolina. This involved and entailed agency best practices. One of the best ways to describe it was they went above and beyond what was required in the fire industry, and they assured them that all their folks were properly trained and that they had up to date equipment. He knew there was a lot more that goes into it than just those items, but they could be assured that the City's Fire Department in the City of Hickory was one of the best and they continued to get updates and have all the necessary equipment and training that they need to hold this level of accreditation. He asked Chief Matthew Hutchinson to please pass that along to all the members of the fire department, because he knew that it was not just one person, it was an entire group that had to meet that accreditation. Well done there. They appreciated that.

City Manager Warren Wood advised they would do a presentation on that at the next City Council meeting.

Mayor Guess asked if there was anyone else on Council or staff that had any general comments that they would like to make.

Alderman Wood reminded everyone that the clocks spring forward on Sunday morning. Along with the fire theme, change the batteries in your smoke detectors. And remind people to do that, please.

Mayor Guess interjected and your carbon dioxide detectors. He asked if they still checked alarms for people that were not able. They had been providing that service for a while.

Alderman Wood mentioned that carbon dioxide detectors had a lifespan to them. People need to know that they do have a lifespan to them and will stop detecting.

City Manager Warren Wood had a bit of sad news. Public Utilities Director Shawn Pennell, after 30 years of service with the City of Hickory, had announced that he was going to be retiring at the end of May. He had done an outstanding job and stepped up when they needed him. They appreciated Shawn's service. He was a true success story for the City of Hickory. He had been committed and been here for 30 years. He really moved up the ranks. He did an outstanding job, and he will be

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able to spend more time with his family. He torpedoed his retirement plans last year, begging him to stay. He did not do that this time, too bad. They appreciated Shawn, and all that he had done, and they still had him for a while. He thanked him for all his service.

Council Members thanked Mr. Pennell.

Alderman Freeman thanked the Council, the Mayor, the City, as well as the community of Ridgeview. He was absent from the last City Council meeting. In the month of February, he was preaching funerals every week, and one of them happened to be a first cousin, and then the next week it was his youngest sister. He thanked everyone for their prayers and support. And Debbie Miller sent a sympathy card as well.

XIV. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:26 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk