City of Harrisonburg

409 S. Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Meeting Minutes - Final
City Council

Wednesday, November 12, 2025 | **7:00 PM** | **Council Chambers**

1. Roll Call

Capt. Chris Monahan was also present.

Present: 4 - Mayor Deanna R. Reed, Vice-Mayor Dany Fleming, Council Member Nasser Alsaadun and Council Member Monica Robinson

Absent: 1 - Council Member Laura Dent

Also Present: 4 - City Manager Ande Banks, City Attorney Chris Brown, City Clerk Pam Ulmer and Chief Matthew Tobia

2. Moment of Silence

Mayor Reed offered a moment of silence

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Reed led the Pledge of Allegiance

4. Special Recognition

5. Consent Agenda (any item placed on the consent agenda shall be removed and taken up as a separate matter, if so requested by any member of Council, otherwise all items will be voted on with one (1) motion)

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Vice-Mayor Fleming, that the consent agenda be approved. The motion carried with a recorded roll call vote taken as follows:

Yes: 4 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Council Member Dent

5.a. Minutes From the October 14, 2025 City Council meeting

These minutes were approved on the consent agenda

5.b. Consider approving a request from Anicira Veterinary Center to rezone 910 North Liberty Street

This rezoning request was approved on second reading

5.c. Consider approving a request from EP Harrisonburg Owner LLC and Cook Creek Church of the Brethren Cemetery to rezone (proffer amendment) 1010 Garbers Church Road, 1645 Erickson Avenue, 1781 South High Street, and South Dogwood Drive (Bluestone Town Center)

This rezoning request was approved on second reading

5.d. Consider a supplemental appropriation in the amount of $180,000 for the Sanitation Fund

This supplemental appropriation was approved on second reading

5.e. Consider a supplemental appropriation in the amount of $1,231,557 for contributions to the Children's Services Act (CSA)

This supplemental appropriation was approved on second reading

5.f. Consider a supplemental appropriation in the amount of $1,863,581.74 for General Fund grants

This supplemental appropriation was approved on second reading

6. Public Hearings

6.a. Consider a request from the City of Harrisonburg to rezone 2410 Reservoir Street

Adam Fletcher, director of Community Development, presented a request to rezone property located at 2410 Reservoir Street from R-3 to R-5C. He reviewed the surrounding area and zoning designations, long term plans for the area, and noted this is one of the properties listed as city surplus and sold to Frank Gordon, Valley Housing Trust, at a previous Council meeting. He reviewed the proffers offered, entrance requirements, and the conceptual layout.

He stated staff and Planning Commission (5-0) recommended approval of the request.

Discussion took place regarding safety issues with exiting on to Reservoir Street and possible remedies.

At 7:10 pm Mayor Reed closed the regular session and called the first public hearing to order. A notice appeared in the Daily News-Record on Thursday, October 30, 2025, and Thursday, November 6, 2025.

Frank Gordon, applicant, stated he appreciates Council reviewing this request and spoke on the difference between R-3 and R-5 for this particular development in order

to maintain the affordable housing aspect.

Discussion took place regarding the funding of this project.

At 7:16 pm Mayor Reed closed the public hearing and the regular session reconvened.

Further discussion took place about the need for this type of development in the city, supporting local developers, prioritizing affordable housing, and Council asked the applicant to consider the safety of the entrance as the development advances.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Fleming, seconded by Council Member Robinson, that this rezoning request be approved as presented. The motion carried with a recorded roll call vote taken as follows:

6.b. Consider a request to rezone 320 South Main Street

Adam Fletcher, director of Community development, presented a request to rezone property located at 320 South Main Street from B-2 to B-1C. He reviewed the history of previous actions by Planning Commission and City Council, the surrounding area, parking requirements, and the proffers submitted.

He stated staff and Planning Commission (6-0) recommended approval of the request.

At 7:24 pm Mayor Reed closed the regular session and called the second public hearing to order. A notice appeared in the Daily News-Record on Thursday, October 30, 2025, and Thursday, November 6, 2025.

There being no one desiring to be heard, Mayor Reed closed the public hearing at 7:25 p.m., and the regular session reconvened.

A motion was made by Council Member Alsaadun, seconded by Council Member Robinson, that this rezoning request be approved. The motion carried with a recorded roll call vote taken as follows:

7. Regular Items

7.a. Discussion Regarding Communications to Federal Representatives Related to Community Safety

Mayor Reed urged discussion on how to address recent harmful actions by ICE agents, saying the incidents threaten the safety and values of the Harrisonburg community. She emphasized that the issue is about protecting residents, not politics, and reaffirmed the city's commitment to dignity, compassion, and justice for all. Reed

praised the council for addressing the matter publicly and standing with community members who are experiencing ongoing fear and distress.

Vice Mayor Fleming said recent ICE and Homeland Security actions have created fear, disrupted families, and harmed Harrisonburg's values as an inclusive community. He emphasized that immigrants are central to the city's fabric and that targeting them hurts everyone. Citing specific reports of unsafe and unprofessional federal enforcement practices, he called for federal and state officials to investigate and clarify standards for these agencies. While acknowledging local limits, he stressed the council's responsibility to protect trust and safety and thanked residents supporting affected families. Fleming concluded that the city must continue working toward being a compassionate and courageous community.

Council Member Robinson emphasized that local officials have a duty to protect vulnerable residents and support efforts to hold federal immigration agencies accountable. She agreed fully with Vice Mayor Fleming's statements, noting they reflect the council's mission and values. Robinson said the conversation must continue until proper oversight is in place and federal representatives take action. She affirmed that the council stands firmly with Harrisonburg residents, opposes inhumane treatment and unsafe enforcement practices, and appreciates the work put into the statement addressing ICE activities.

Council Member Alsaadun thanked fellow council members and city staff for taking action to support affected residents. He shared a personal example of a friend who was recently detained by ICE despite having no criminal record, describing the emotional toll on the man's young daughter. Alsaadun questioned why law-abiding community members seeking safety and stability are treated inhumanely and emphasized that the U.S. should uphold its reputation for human rights. He called for proper training for ICE agents and affirmed that the City Council stands with all impacted individuals and families.

Mayor Reed acknowledged the city's limited authority over federal immigration agencies but requested that the city manager draft a formal letter from the City Council to state and federal representatives outlining concerns about ICE and Homeland Security actions in Harrisonburg. The letter should address safety issues, reports of children being left unattended, hazardous enforcement practices, and request investigations by state and federal officials, while also asking legislators whether they share the city's commitment to protecting residents from harm. The city manager agreed to prepare the correspondence. Reed also encouraged outreach to other cities and challenged the Rockingham County Board of Supervisors to join in

advocating for residents' safety, noting the shared community between the city and county.

7.b. Consider approving the updated Harrisonburg, Rockingham County, and James Madison University Emergency Operations Plan

Paul Helmuth, Deputy Emergency Coordinator Administrative Officer Harrisonburg Fire Department, presented the 2025 Joint Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) for approval, between the City, Rockingham County, and James Madison University, which is required to be done every four years per State Code. He reviewed the following:

- Powers and duties of the local subdivisions;
- Requirements for the EOP;
- Local emergency;
- Declaration of Local Emergency per State Code;
- Office of Emergency Services per city code;

He reviewed the following breakdown of the EOP organization:

- The basic plan;
- Appendices;
- Chain of command;
- Emergency support functions defined by FEMA and VDEM;
- Primary and secondary agencies;
- Support / incident annex.

Discussion took place regarding the level of detail and planning that takes place to create the EOP, other supporting agencies, and regular monthly meetings of the Emergency Management Task Force, and the recent Harrisonburg Rockingham Emergency Alert system.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Fleming, seconded by Council Member Robinson, adopt the resolution as presented. The motion carried with a recorded roll call vote taken as follows:

Yes: 4 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 1 - Council Member Dent

7.c. Consider adopting a Resolution Authorizing and Approving The Purchase and Renovation of 227 N. Main Street, Harrisonburg, Virginia, Into a Mixed-Use Housing and Commercial Development By The Harrisonburg Redevelopment And Housing Authority (HRHA)

Chris Brown, city attorney, presented a resolution authorizing the Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority (HRHA) to purchase and renovate property located at 227 N. Main St, (Glens Fair Price), for housing and office space for the

HRHA.

Michael Wong, director of HRHA, stated the goal for this request is to build an extension to the current Glens Fair Price building, create 16 units between 400 - 500 sq. feet each, and have office space for HRHA. He stated the need for more affordable housing is great and these units can be used temporarily for displacement of residents during the Lineweaver renovations. Once renovations are complete these 16 units would be freed up for additional housing needs. Mr. Wong stated they held 2 community meetings regarding this request for feedback from the community with supportive results. He stated the funding being sought would be for the purchase and renovation of 227 N. Main Street as well as the renovations for the Lineweaver property.

Discussion took place regarding financing for these projects, the current problems of criminal activity, loitering etc. around the Lineweaver property, concerns of safety at that property, concerns about management of the additional housing unit, need for security at these locations, and a request for a concept plan of the project.

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Council Member Alsaadun, that the request be tabled until November 25, 2025. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

7.d. Consider adopting a resolution authorizing and approving the Senior and Affordable Housing Developments in the Bluestone Town Center Project, Harrisonburg, Virginia, Constructed by the Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority (HRHA)

Chris Brown, city attorney, presented a resolution authorizing HRHA to move forward with two subdivision elements at Bluestone Town Center development, to construct and operate 62 residential units designed for the elderly and to construct and operate 83 affordable residential housing units at the Bluestone Town Center.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Fleming, seconded by Council Member Alsaadun, tp adopt the resolution as presented. The motion carried with a recorded roll call vote taken as follows:

Yes: 4 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Council Member Dent

7.e. Presentation of Neff Avenue Development Opportunity Update

Liz Webb, housing coordinator, presented an update on the Neff Avenue affordable housing development. She reviewed the timeline, the proposal components, evaluation criteria, and the selected offeror.

Patrick Stewart, regional vice president, and Patrick Batemen, senior developer, Pennrose Bricks & Mortar / Heart & Soul, reviewed the following:

- Who Pennrose is;
- The Development Team;
- Their mission and vision;
- Partnerships and financing;
- Their response and priorities to the RFP;
- Examples of some of their developments;

Mr. Stewart and Mr. Batemen stated they are excited to work with the city and get the development started.

Ms. Webb stated this is a culmination of the requests and ideals of what the city should be doing for affordable housing. She stated the next steps will be contract negotiations, zoning requirements, and public engagement. She asked Council for approval of the direction of this presentation.

Discussion took place about the presentation, how community involvement is important to the developer, concerns about other developments that were approved but have not yet been built, criteria of the selection process, and the impression this developer will be a great fit for the city. Council agreed to move forward in the process.

This Presentation was received and filed.

7.f. Consider approval of the display of the Community Mosaic Project mosaics on the fence line of the alleyway between Water Street Parking Deck and Blacks Run

Amy Snider, deputy city manager, shared a request on behalf of Oasis Fine Art and Ms. Barbara Camph and Ms. Sarah Locke, to place a permanent display of the Community Mosaic Project on city property. She stated installation would be along the fenceline of the alleyway between Blacks Run and Water Street parking deck, for 80 or so mosaics. She stated the City Public Works department has evaluated the location and is in support. Oasis will complete the installation with the oversight of the Public Works department.

Ms. Camph shared the development of this project, and noted the project concluded in September 2025 with over 80 panels and more than 6,000 people contributing to the panels' creation.

A motion was made by Council Member Alsaadun, seconded by Council Member Robinson, to approve the request as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 4 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Council Member Dent

7.g. Consider approving a Downtown Outdoor Dining and Encroachment Requests from Black Sheep Coffee (80 East Market Street)

Adam Fletcher, director of Community Development, presented a request for an outdoor dining and encroachment license for the property owned by Black Sheep Coffee Company. He reviewed the location and the requirements and conditions.

He stated staff recommend approval with conditions that he presented.

Discussion took place regarding safety of bicycles and pedestrians in that area should the license be approved.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Fleming, seconded by Council Member Robinson, to approve the request as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 4 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Council Member Dent

7.h. Appoint one delegate and one alternate for the NLC Annual Business meeting at the NLC Conference in Salt Lake City on November 18-22, 2025

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Fleming, seconded by Council Member Robinson, to appoint Council Member Robinson as delegate and Council Member Alsaadun, as alternate, to the NLC Annual Business meeting. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 4 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Council Member Dent

7.i. Consider granting an Easement to SVEC to provide power to Pump Station

Chris Brown, city attorney, presented a request to approve an easement to SVEC, as part of the Eastern Raw Waterline project, to the city's pump station located on Goodsmill Road.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Fleming, seconded by Council Member Alsaadun, to approve the request as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 4 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Council Member Dent

8. Other Matters

8.a. Comments from the public, limited to five minutes, on matters not on the regular agenda. (Name and address are required)

Panayotis "Poti" Giannakouros, spoke on a recent article in the newspaper; spoke on a Council meeting where Charlie Chenault was on Council when the renaming to Martin Luther King, Jr. Way was approved; and the upcoming People's Day event;

8.b. City Council and Staff

Council Member Robinson spoke on a recent speaking engagement at the Watershed Forum; her participation with Blue Ridge Nursing Home's trick or trunk event; attendance on the panel for an upcoming event at EMU; and attended the retirement party of Battalion Chief Lawrence Werner, Harrisonburg Fire Department.

Vice Mayor Fleming spoke on his attendance at Battalion Chief Lawrence Werner retirement celebration; recent meeting with Deb Cook, Chief Innovations Officer, Harrisonburg City Schools; recent Virginia First Cities legislative board meeting; launched the first University Community Council in Virginia; and upcoming attendance at the National League of Cities (NLC) City Summit Conference;

Mayor Reed spoke on her attendance on the panel at a recent NAACP State meeting; ribbon cutting for the new 7-Brew on S. Main Street; and attendance on the panel for an upcoming event at EMU.

Ande Banks, city manager, stated the City School Administrators are in need of a letter of support from City Council for a competitive grant application through the Virginia Department of Education that would allow up to 20% return of approved capital projects such as the HVAC system replacements and other renovations. Council approved the city manager to draft the letter of support.

9. Boards and Commissions

9.a. Board of Building Code Appeals

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Vice Mayor Fleming, to appoint Helen Momoh-kwuelum and Valerie Eshleman-Robles to full first terms and Mike Williams as alternate, to the Board of Building Code Appeals. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

10. Closed Session

10.a. Closed Session as authorized by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A), under: Subsection 3 for a discussion of the disposition of publicly held real estate and the acquisition of real estate for a public purpose where the discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating position of the public body.

At 9:38 p.m., a motion was made by Vice Mayor Fleming, seconded by Council Member Robinson, to enter into closed session as authorized by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A), under: Subsection 3 for a discussion of the disposition of publicly held real estate and the acquisition of real estate for a public purpose where the discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating position of the public body.. The motion carried with a recorded roll call vote taken as follows:

Yes: 4 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Council Member Dent

Consider authorizing the City Manager to execute an exclusive right-to-sell listing agreement with a licensed real estate brokerage and to solicit and negotiate offers for the City-owned property at 301 S. Main Street using a best-value approach

At 10:10 p.m. the closed session ended and the regular session reconvened. City Attorney Brown read the following statement, which was agreed to with a unanimous recorded vote of Council: I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under Chapter 37 of Title 2.2 of the Code, of Virginia, 1950, as amended, and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the closed meeting by the City Council.

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Vice Mayor Fleming, to authorize the City Manager to execute an exclusive right to sell listing agreement with a licensed real estate brokerage and to solicit and negotiate offers for the City owned property at 301 S. Main Street using a best-value approach. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

11. Adjournment

At 10:11 p.m., there being no further business and on motion adopted, the meeting was adjourned.

CITY CLERK | MAYOR