



# City of Harrisonburg

409 S. Main Street  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

## Meeting Minutes - Final City Council

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Tuesday, September 9, 2025

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

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### 1. Roll Call

**Present:** 4 - Vice-Mayor Dany Fleming, Council Member Laura Dent, Council Member Nasser Alsaadun and Council Member Monica Robinson

**Absent:** 1 - Mayor Deanna R. Reed

**Also Present:** 5 - City Manager Ande Banks, City Attorney Chris Brown, City Clerk Pam Ulmer, Deputy Police Chief Rod Pollard and Chief Matthew Tobia

### 2. Moment of Silence

Vice Mayor Fleming offered a moment of silence

### 3. Pledge of Allegiance

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

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

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 1 - Mayor Reed

#### 5.a. Minutes from the August 26, 2025 City Council meeting

These minutes were approved on the consent agenda

### 6. Public Hearings

#### 6.a. Public Hearing for PY2024 CDBG CAPER

Ande Banks, city manager, reviewed the 2024 CDBG Projects as of September 1, 2025. He noted the project grants totaled \$627,906 and this opens the 15-day

public comment period. He provided contact information for public comments.

At 7:08 pm Vice Mayor Fleming closed the regular session and called the first public hearing to order. A notice appeared in the Daily News-Record on Monday, August 25, 2025

Panayotis "Poti" Giannakouros, spoke on the tall grass and weeds ordinance, paper alleys, and trapping animals on city property.

At 7:14 pm Vice Mayor Fleming closed the public hearing and the regular session reconvened.

No action required

**This Report was received and filed.**

**6.b.** Consider a request for a special use permit to allow a restaurant at 1710 Country Club Road

Adam Fletcher, director of Community Development, presented a request for a special use permit for property located at 1710 Country Club Road to allow restaurants in the M1 zoning district. He reviewed the zoning of the area and noted the property is in the flood plain. Council Member Robinson asked for clarification between flood plain and flood way. Mr. Fletcher reviewed the differences. He reviewed the requirements of the food truck related to the flood plain codes. He reviewed the property, parking requirements, and curbing concerns.

He stated staff and Planning Commission (6-0) recommended approval with a few conditions.

Discussion took place regarding the parking availability at the property, and that Council was pleased staff put in extra effort to work with the applicant.

At 7:35 pm Vice Mayor Fleming closed the regular session and called the second public hearing to order. A notice appeared in the Daily News-Record on Wednesday, August 27, 2025 and Wednesday, September 3, 2025

Ignacio Arosetgui, applicants father, stated the food will be Cuban inspired and he was pleased a solution could be found.

Panayotis "Poti" Giannakouros, spoke on the Planning Commission processing on this item; how a previous similar request was denied; and that there were gaps in our zoning policies.

At 7:42 pm Vice Mayor Fleming closed the public hearing and the regular session

reconvened.

**A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Council Member Alsaadun, to approve the special use permit as presented. The motion carried with a recorded roll call vote taken as follows:**

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

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 1 - Mayor Reed

- 6.c.** Consider a supplemental appropriation for the carryover and reappropriation of prior year encumbrances and unexpended grants, and for the appropriation of new grant awards in the amount of \$22.7 million

Ande Banks, city manager, presented a request for three supplemental appropriations. The first is for carryover encumbrances in the amount of \$14,947,224; the second is for carryover unexpended grants in the amount of \$5,983,590; and the third is for new grants in the amount of \$1,807,028. The grand total for these appropriations is \$22,737,842

At 7:46 pm Vice Mayor Fleming closed the regular session and called the third public hearing to order. A notice appeared in the Daily News-Record on Friday, August 29, 2025 and Tuesday, September 2, 2025.

Panayotis "Poti" Giannakouros, spoke on the sizable amount of local funds, his concern with how the federal government may stop providing some grants, and the need to be intentional with the use of public spaces.

James Sheets, 365 N. Main, spoke on some of the infrastructure projects from grant funding and asked if public bus stops and ADA accessibility can be included by grant funding.

At 7:54 pm Vice Mayor Fleming closed the public hearing and the regular session reconvened.

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

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

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 1 - Mayor Reed

## **7. Regular Items**

### **7.a. Update on Solid Waste Collection Improvements**

Tom Hartman, director of Public Works, presented an update on the Solid Waste Collection Program to include the following proposed changes:

- **Collection Day Adjustment** - The current Friday collection route will be moved to Wednesday
- **Online Reservation System** - Bulk item and yard debris collection requests will transition from every other Wednesday to an online, reservation-based system, allowing residents to schedule pickups on their regular collection day
- **Public Outreach and Education** - Prior to implementation, Public Works will conduct an outreach campaign to inform residents of the changes, including updated service dates and instructions for using the online reservation platform.

Discussion took place regarding the online process, access to the online process in other languages, cost savings, fine processes, ecological benefits and the mobile recycling units.

No action required

**This Report was received and filed.**

### **7.b. Consider approving a resolution setting the percentage of Personal Property Tax Relief for Tax Year 2025**

Chris Brown, City Attorney, presented a request to adopt a resolution setting the 2025 personal property tax relief to 18.2%. The \$1,522,583 the city receives from the Commonwealth each year must be spread among the qualifying vehicles, of which there were 30,611.

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

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

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 1 - Mayor Reed

- 7.c.** Consider adopting a resolution approving the city's participation in the Proposed Settlement of Opioid-Related Claims against Alvogen, Amneal, Apotex, Hikma, Indivior, Mylan, Sun, and Zydus, and directing the city manager to execute the documents necessary to effectuate the city's participation in the settlement.

Chris Brown, city attorney, presented a request to adopt a resolution related to the Proposed settlement of Opioid related claims. The settlement will provide \$720 million nationwide, with funds allocated under the Virginia Opioid Abatement Fund and Settlement Allocation Memorandum of Understanding. Participation would allow the City to recover its share of settlement funds to help address the ongoing impacts of the opioid epidemic on local emergency services, law enforcement, public health, and related programs. Discussion took place regarding deadlines and distribution of funding.

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

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

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 1 - Mayor Reed

- 7.d.** Consider a reimbursement resolution for the Municipal Building and City Hall renovation project

Ande Banks, city manager, stated staff has been pursuing the renovation of the original municipal building. He stated if at some point bonds were needed to be obtained, this resolution will allow the city to reimburse itself for these costs from future debt proceeds.

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

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

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 1 - Mayor Reed

- 7.e.** Update on the Council Vision and Action Plan

Brian Vandenberg, assistant to the city manager, presented an update on the Council Vision and Action Plan. He reviewed the following:

- What a Council Vision and Action Plan are

- Progress on Council priorities over the past fiscal year
- Updates City Council made to Vision and Priorities

Mr. Vandenberg asked Council to approve the 2024 Council Vision and 2025-2028 Action Plan.

Discussion took place on how this is more public facing so residents can see the work that staff is doing to complete Council's vision.

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

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

**No:** 0

**Absent:** 1 - Mayor Reed

## **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)**

Sam Nichols, expressed concern over ICE activity in the area and shared two stories of individuals impacted by ICE enforcement.

Teresa Hinckley, shared several stories of families impacted by ICE enforcement.

Wayne B. Wenger, spoke on issues of solid waste trucks leaving unpleasant liquid behind on his street; expressed concern about homes with unkempt yards and exteriors; and shared his disapproval of location of proposed Link development.

Laura Comarado, highlighted perceived discrepancies in the level of real support between opposing petitions regarding the proposed Link development

Jennifer Cunningham, expressed concern of potential local tax exemptions that might be offered to the developer of the Link.

Carl Larson, expressed concerns about the design of the proposed Link development. Suggested staff and Council pursue avenues for long term design oversight in downtown.

Panayotis "Poti" Giannakouros, invited immigrant activists to participate in his organization and encouraged activists of any cause to support other causes as well. He voiced opposition to regulating appearance of yards

James Sheets, stated he was unlawfully prohibited from attending a City Council meeting. Sought to increase the number of ADA bus stops.

### **8.b. City Council and Staff**

Ande Banks, city manager, explained the process of facilitation between the Link developer and residents would not be overseen by City staff. A third-party facilitation team and the developer would make communication regarding facilitation event. An update on the process from a facilitation team is anticipated for September 23rd. Council Member Alsaadun asked how the facilitation team was chosen, and City Manager Banks explained neither the developer nor the City was not involved in the process for choosing a team, but volunteers from JMU and EMU came forward to offer services. The City would also not weigh in on format or structure of facilitation.

Council Member Alsaadun spoke on the August 29th meeting with EMU and the recent City-School Liaison meeting.

Council Member Dent spoke on her participation on the National League of Cities taskforce and noted that September 19th, 2025 starts early voting.

Council Member Robinson spoke on the recent EMU meeting; the Chamber of Commerce Presidential Address; the upcoming African American Festival Saturday, on September 13th, 2025; and the Community Connectors meeting on Saturday 20th, 2025; and an upcoming Northeast Neighborhood meeting.

Vice Mayor Fleming spoke on the partnership with universities and City; recent meeting with the VML Legislative Committee meeting; his attendance to an AI for Public Good course; spoke on AI policy for city; and shared his concerns for those impacted by ICE activities.

## **9. Closed Session**

## **10. Adjournment**

At 9:41 p.m., there being no further business and on motion adopted, the meeting was adjourned.

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CITY CLERK

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MAYOR