



City of Harrisonburg

409 S. Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Meeting Minutes - Draft City Council

Tuesday, December 9, 2025

7:00 PM

Council Chambers

1. Roll Call

Present: 5 - Mayor Deanna R. Reed, Vice-Mayor Dany Fleming, Council Member Laura Dent, Council Member Nasser Alsaadun and Council Member Monica Robinson

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

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

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

5.a. Minutes from the November 25, 2025 City Council meeting

These minutes were approved on the consent agenda

5.b. Consider a request from City of Harrisonburg to amend the Zoning Ordinance to add a new term "Inpatient Substance Use Disorder Treatment Facility" and other related changes

This ordinance amendment was approved on second reading

5.c. Consider a supplemental appropriation for the Economic Development Department in the amount of \$500,000 for funds received from the Virginia Commonwealth Opportunity Fund

This supplemental appropriation was approved on second reading

6. Public Hearings

6.a. Amendments to the 2023, 2024, and 2025 CDBG Action Plans

Kristin McCombe, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) manager, provided a review of the amendments to the 2023, 2024 and 2025 CDBG Action Plan.

She stated this opens the 30 day public comment period which will end at 9:00 am January 12, 2026. She provided information to submit public comments.

At 7:05 pm Mayor Reed closed the regular session and called the first public hearing to order. A notice appeared in the Daily News-Record on Tuesday, November 25, 2025.

There being no one desiring to be heard, Mayor Reed closed the public hearing at 7:06 p.m., and the regular session reconvened.

No action required

6.b. Consider approval of the disposition of real estate owned by the City of Harrisonburg at 2421 and 2425 Reservoir Street to Central Valley Habitat for Humanity and adopt a resolution authorizing the sale of publicly owned real estate.

Liz Webb, housing coordinator, presented a request for the sale of city owned property located at 2421 and 2425 Reservoir Street. She stated this is part of the city's housing strategy guidelines for disposition of surplus land suited to new housing development in line with the Housing Study's recommendations.

She reviewed the property, the selected application (Central Valley Habitat for Humanity), and next steps.

At 7: 07 pm Mayor Reed closed the regular session and called the second public hearing to order. A notice appeared in the Daily News-Record on Friday, November 28, 2025.

Shannon Porter, director, Central Valley Habitat for Humanity, thanked Council for the opportunity, and spoke on the needs for those whose lives are being limited by an unbalanced and increasingly expensive rental market with very little pathway to home ownership; referenced the success of the Suter Street properties; and their plan to make the new housing on Reservoir Street as affordable as possible. He stated the plan is to build 11-13 high quality permanent affordable units, sold to families earning

between 60% - 80% AMI, and install solar panels on the units. He thanked Council for their consideration.

Panayotis "Poti" Giannakouros, spoke on how local government excels when it provides public goods such as a park, not by redirecting funds from one user to another user, in this case trying to address the housing issue by subsidizing individual developers; he spoke on public nuisance enforcement and noted he is not in favor of this project.

At 7:14 p.m., Mayor Reed closed the public hearing and the regular session reconvened.

Discussion took place regarding the model Habitat for Humanity uses; homeownership for the 60%-80% AMI is almost impossible without these types of projects; and the partnership with Give Solar for the solar panels on each of the units to help reduce utility bills;

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

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

6.c. Consider approving an Ordinance authorizing the City Manager to execute a QuitClaim Deed conveying real property to JMU Foundation - Virginia Avenue LLC.

Chris Brown, city attorney, presented an ordinance authorizing the city manager to execute a Quit Claim Deed conveying property to JMU Foundation Virginia Avenue LLC. He stated this is for a 1,278 sq ft strip that was not included in the deed when JMU Foundation Virginia Avenue, LLC purchased the property but always treated it as part of their property. He stated the city has no use for this small strip and no objection to transferring it to the Foundation to clear up the title issues.

At 7:20 pm Mayor Reed closed the regular session and called the third public hearing to order. A notice appeared in the Daily News-Record on Monday, December 1, 2025.

There being no one desiring to be heard, Mayor Reed closed the public hearing at 7:20 p.m., and the regular session reconvened.

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

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

6.d. Presentation on Safe Routes to School Sidewalk Project (Keister and Waterman Elementary Schools)

Tom Hartman, director of Public Works, presented the Safe Routes to School sidewalk project. He reviewed the funding and the schedule. He stated this is the public hearing prior to the right of way phase and no action is required by Council. He stated this project is funded through a VDOT awarded grant and reviewed the locations and timelines of the sidewalks to be completed.

Discussion took place regarding the safety these sidewalks will provide in high the traffic areas;

At 7:25 pm Mayor Reed closed the regular session and called the fourth public hearing to order. A notice appeared in the Daily News-Record on Friday, November 7, 2025, and Monday, December 1, 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.

No action required

7. Regular Items

7.a. Introduction of the newest Chief Public Defender for Harrisonburg / Rockingham County

Abby Thibeault, Chief Public Defender, Harrisonburg/Rockingham County, introduced members of her office. She shared the statistics of her office since she started in January 2025 and the hard work her staff has done. She reviewed some of the programs and strategies they use;

Discussion took place regarding alternatives to incarceration; collaborations with community organizations and support services; measures of success and growth; qualifications to receive the services of a public defender; Diversion and Restorative Justice programs; mediation with immigrant communities through the Fairfield Center; and the great work the Public Defender's office is doing.

This Report was received and filed.

7.b. Presentation of the City's Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR)

Matthew Heatwole, Brown Edwards & Company, thanked Council and Finance staff;

presented a clean unmodified audit opinion on the city's financial statements. He provided a brief overview of the City's Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.

Ande Banks, city manager, noted this is the 30th consecutive year that the Finance Department has received the Certificate Of Achievement For Excellence In Financial Reporting.

Vice Mayor Fleming stated how staff should look at how the additional one-time funding over the past several years has affected the operational budget, and even though the City has a strong unassigned fund balance, it is possible that further decreases in federal funding for many programs such as healthcare, afterschool programs, etc. may occur.

Further conversation took place about being cautious of how the city moves forward, and how to use this report in a strategic way when it comes to FY 26-27 Budget.

This Presentation was received and filed.

7.c. Consider adopting a resolution dedication East Kaylor Park Drive as a public street

Chris Brown, city attorney, presented a resolution dedicating East Kaylor Park Drive as a public street. He stated this will add maintained lane miles to the street inventory, providing access to greater funding. The resolution will merely document the dedication since the city currently owns the property.

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Vice Mayor Fleming, that the resolution be adopted as presented. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Alsaadun, Council Member Robinson and Council Member Dent

No: 0

7.d. VDOT Urban Maintenance Inventory Additions and Deletions

Tom Hartman, director of Public Works stated agenda items 7d and 7e are presented together. He presented two resolutions related to the VDOT Urban Maintenance inventory, reviewed the new streets added, street conversions, the streets deleted, and the bicycle lane conversions.

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

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Council Member Alsaadun, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

7.e. VDOT Urban Maintenance Inventory Bicycle Lane Conversion

Presented with agenda item 7d

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

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

7.f. Consider approving Ordinance Amending And Re-Enacting Title 6 Chapter 2 - Solid Waste Collection And Disposal, Article A - General Provisions, Section 6-2-2, 6-2-6, And Article C. - Solid Waste Collection And Removal, Section 6-2-37(A), Of The Code Of Ordinances City Of Harrisonburg, Virginia

Tom Hartman, director of Public Works, presented ordinance amendments to the solid waste management sections. He reviewed the amendments requested and noted that some of the amendments are related to allowing a shorter time for residents to pick up refuse and solid waste from a 10-day window to a 24-hour window.

Discussion took place regarding the definition of refuse and solid waste, the change in allowable time to pick up and how it will help keep trash out of sewer systems; the possibility of the shorter allowed pick-up times sending a harsh message to students; flexibility of the Public Works Department to allow more time for removal for extenuating circumstances.

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

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

No: 1 - Council Member Alsaadun

7.g. Presentation of the North Mason Street Demonstration Project Summary and Upcoming Corridor Study

Jakob zumFelde, planning manager, Public Works Department, presented a summary and upcoming corridor study for the North Mason Street Demonstration Project. He reviewed the project, collected data, community engagement opportunities, and questionnaire feedback. He stated there is a study with city staff and support from the Harrisonburg Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization over the next few months to review the desires heard, the goals and principals of this project, and work to identify what the long term opportunities are for this area.

Discussion took place on the process of the pop-up temporary structures that were used; and possible SmartScale funding for any work.

This Report was received and filed.

7.h. Consider approval of a contract amendment for the Public Safety Building roof replacement project

Chris Brown, city attorney, presented a request to approve a contract amendment for the Public Safety building roof replacement project, due to unexpected change in physical plans from what was originally presented.

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

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

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)

Tom Domonoski, 461 Lee Avenue, spoke on the recent events to make the city more walkable and bikeable; the actions from ICE in the community and the letter Council was to prepare for the state and federal legislature.

Panayotis "Poti" Giannakouros, spoke on the unplanned growth due to Farmer Focus's increase in employees; the Harrisonburg Martin Luther King, Jr. Coalition participation in Winter Wonder Fest;

8.b. City Council and Staff

Ande Banks, city manager, presented a copy of a draft letter for approval to the Governor Elect, Lt. Governor Elect, Attorney General Elect, Senator Kaine, Senator Warner and Congressman Cline as discussed at the November 25, 2025, City Council meeting.

Mayor Reed stated everyone has had the opportunity to review the letter in advance, and some edits have been provided. She asked Council if there were any more edits requested. She stated she would like to hand deliver this letter while she is in Richmond on November 28, 2025. Discussion took place regarding the letter, its purpose, and recommended amendments.

Council Member Alsaadun spoke on the ribbon cutting for HFD Station 5;

Council Member Dent spoke on a panel she will be on for COP30;

Council Member Robinson spoke on the ribbon cutting for HFD Station 5; ribbon cutting for Commerce Village II; upcoming NAACP Gala;

Vice Mayor Fleming spoke on the ribbon cutting for Commerce Village II; NLC grant that was rewarded through Economic Development;

Mayor Reed spoke on the Holiday Parade; congratulated JMU Dukes;

9. Boards and Commissions

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 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 9:15 p.m., a motion was made by Vice Mayor Fleming, seconded by Council Member Dent, 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 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: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

11. Adjournment

At 9:31 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.

At 9:31 p.m., there being no further business and on motion adopted, the meeting was adjourned.

CITY CLERK

MAYOR