



City of Harrisonburg

409 S. Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Meeting Minutes - Draft City Council

Tuesday, October 14, 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, Chief Matthew Tobia and Capt. Charles Grubbs

2. Moment of Silence

Mayor Reed offered a moment of silence

Council Member Robinson joined the meeting at 7:24pm

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Reed led the Pledge of Allegiance

4. Special Recognition

4.a. Proclamation recognizing October 23, 2025 as National Lights On Afterschool Day

Mayor Reed presented the proclamation recognizing October 23, 2025, as National Lights on Afterschool Day. On the Road Collaborative and Boys and Girls Club students, leaders and parents received the proclamation.

This Proclamation was read into the record.

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, to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion carried with a recorded roll call vote taken as follows:

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

No: 0

Absent: 1 - Council Member Robinson

- 5.a. Minutes from the September 23, 2025 City Council meeting

These minutes were approved on the consent agenda

- 5.b. Consider the special event application request for the Rocktown Turkey Trot on Thursday, November 27, 2025.

This special event application was approved on the consent agenda

- 5.c. Consider the special event application request for HDR's Winter Wonderfest & Harrisonburg's Holiday Parade on Saturday, December 6, 2025.

This special event application was approved on the consent agenda

6. Public Hearings

- 6.a. Consider approving a request from Anicira Veterinary Center to rezone 910 North Liberty Street

Adam Fletcher, director of Community Development, presented a rezoning request for property located at 910 N. Liberty Street from M-1 to B-2C. He reviewed the property, the surrounding zoning designations, the purpose of the request, the proffers submitted, and the flood zone designations for the area. He shared the concerns staff had regarding a child daycare facility in this location but noted staff was not opposed to the rezoning.

He stated Staff and Planning Commission (5-0) recommended approval of the rezoning as it is in conformance to the land use guide.

Discussion took place regarding specific licensing and state inspections a child daycare center would require and the need to consider safety of children.

At 7:22 pm Mayor Reed closed the regular session and called the first public hearing to order. A notice appeared in the Daily News-Record on Wednesday, October 1, 2025, and Wednesday, October 8, 2025.

Erin Layman, counsel for the applicant, spoke on the requirements from the Department of Education related to child daycare facilities and the steps the proposed leaser has been taking to see if a child daycare center will work at this property.

Panayotis "Poti" Giannakouros, asked Council to not only consider the safety of children but also what happens to a building when it floods.

At 7:27 pm Mayor Reed closed the public hearing and the regular session

reconvened.

Further discussion took place regarding the need for childcare, the concerns of safety, and the many approvals that will be needed to ensure safety.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Fleming, seconded by Council Member Dent, that this rezoning 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.b.** 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)

Adam Fletcher, director of Community Development, presented a master plan amendment (proffer) for the Bluestone Town Center. He reviewed the property, the surrounding zoning, R-7 development zoning regulations, and the amendments requested.

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

At 7:41 pm Mayor Reed closed the regular session and called the second public hearing to order. A notice appeared in the Daily News-Record on Wednesday, October 1, 2025, and Wednesday, October 8, 2025

Dawn Kepplinger, 1691 Parklawn Drive, requested Council review an article distributed to Council regarding Virginia's protected wildlife when they decide on development in the city;

Panayotis "Poti" Giannakouros, spoke on the ecological disaster this development will be; the impact on the water supply and schools this development will cause;

Mr. Fector, Ryan Homes representative, stated ¼ of home buyers in the city are below 80% AMI and the requested amendments would allow for those first-time home buyers to purchase in this development. He stated Ryan Homes will be able to provide financing for these high quality homes.

At 7:51 pm Mayor Reed closed the public hearing and the regular session reconvened.

Discussion took place regarding how expanding the AMI levels to individuals with lower incomes will allow more people to afford homes.

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Council Member Alsaadun, 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 a request from GC & T LLC to close a public alley located between properties identified as tax map numbers 34-E-1 and 2 (530 North Main Street)

Adam Fletcher, director of Community Development, presented an alley closing request for an alley located at 530 N Main Street. He reviewed the property, the history of the alley, and long term plan for area. He stated the applicant owns both sides of the alley.

He stated Staff and Planning Commission (6-0) recommend approval of the request with one condition:

A public general utility easement and a public storm drainage easement shall be reserved in the necessary locations. The location of each easement shall be determined by a survey completed by the applicant for review by the Department of Community Development

At 7:58 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 Wednesday, October 1, 2025, and Wednesday, October 8, 2025

Mike Martin, Cottonwood Commercial, representative for applicant, stated he is available for any questions Council may have. He stated he has already discussed with Harrisonburg Electric Commission regarding the requirements for their easement.

Panayotis "Poti" Giannakouros, spoke on if there is a compelling public use to give up public land; tall grass and weeds ordinance; and urges denying this request.

Karen Thomas, founder and president of the Northeast Neighborhood Association, thanked staff for reaching out to her organization and others in the neighborhood to make sure there was no historic concerns related the request to close the alley and stated the association had none.

At 8:05 pm Mayor Reed closed the public hearing and the regular session reconvened.

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

7. Regular Items

7.a. Consider approving the Ramblewood Road Roadside Memorial

Amy Snider, deputy city manager, presented a request to approve a roadside memorial sign on Ramblewood Road in memory of Josue Serrano on behalf of his family. She stated the requestor will be responsible for the cost of the production of the sign. She shared the incident behind the request.

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Vice Mayor Fleming, to approve the request 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

7.b. Consider appointing Brian Vandenberg, assistant to the city manager, as deputy city clerk

Ande Banks, city manager, requested Council appoint Mr. Brian Vandenberg as deputy city clerk.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Fleming, seconded by Council Member Alsaadun, 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

7.c. Discussion on schedule of remaining City Council meetings for 2025

Mayor Reed stated the schedule of the remaining City Council meetings for 2025 needs to be discussed due to upcoming holidays etc. She stated the city manager, deputy city manager, assistant to the city manager, and the Vice Mayor will not be available for the October 28th, 2025, meeting and suggested this meeting be cancelled. Also, reminded Council that the originally scheduled November 11th, 2025, meeting falls on a holiday and needs to be changed to November 12, 2025. She stated the second meeting in December has historically been cancelled due to

the holidays, and is requesting December 23, 2025, meeting be cancelled.

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

8. Supplementals

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

Larry Propst, director of finance, presented a supplemental appropriation request in the amount of \$180,000 in the sanitation fund balance to purchase a recycling baler.

Tom Hartman, director of Public Works, presented the information on the new baling system for recyclables.

Discussion took place on how this will allow the city to recoup more money from selling recycled plastics and how it will reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

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 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

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

Larry Propst, director of Finance, presented a supplemental appropriation request for the Children Services Act costs share from the city of \$ 1,231,557.

Amy Snider, deputy city manager, stated she is Council's appointee for the Community Policy and Management Team (CPMT) which is the governing body for children services in the community. She shared the history of the Children Services Agencies, the CPMT, and the required local match set by the State. She stated the amount requested is in addition to what was originally budgeted. She stated in fiscal year 2024, 583 youth and their families have been served and in fiscal year 2025, 602 have been served. The expenses from FY24 to FY25 increased by 15.8%. She stated the Office of Children Services completed an audit on the CMPT and she shared their findings, some of the improvements already made and the dedication of the CMPT staff.

Discussion took place regarding the increase in need for services, best practices, the request for more frequent updates, how the selection process works, City and County shares and cases.

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Vice Mayor Fleming, to approve the supplemental appropriation 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

8.c. Consider a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$1,863,581.74 for General Fund grants

Larry Propst, director of Finance, presented a supplemental appropriation request for various grants in the general funds: \$1,483,000 VDOT Grant funds, \$200,000 VA Opioid Abatement, and \$180,000 National Park Service grant Simms Center window restoration.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Fleming, seconded by Council Member Robinson, to approve the supplemental appropriation 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

9. Other Matters

9.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 the trash he found in a pollinator garden on Main Street and the people that are responsible.

Carl Larson, 487 S Mason Street, spoke on the Link development rezoning proposal. He requested City Council direct city staff to do a full fiscal impact analysis of this development and requested Council vote against the rezoning request.

Todd Alexander, stated October 20th will be the first meeting with the developer, the facilitator and the community for the Link development.

Sarah, Broad Street, spoke in favor of the Link development.

9.b. City Council and Staff

Council Member Alsaadun spoke on the dedication of Valley Early Education Reimagined

Council Member Dent spoke on her upcoming Brazil trip that is being sponsored by the Elected Officials to Protect America organization and her recent attendance to the Virginia Clean Energy Summit.

Council Member Robinson spoke on her attendance at the recent Virginia Municipal League (VML) Conference; the Community Criminal Justice Board meeting; a REAL Council listening session; and the Citizens Advisory Board meeting.

Vice Mayor Fleming spoke on the Latino Business Council Launch event; recent HFD promotional event; the VML conference and his appointment on the Board; and the recent JMU and City Liaison meeting.

Mayor Reed spoke on the recent EMU Royals go to Downtown event; Employee Appreciation Week; JMU Candid Conversation of Well Being and Mental Health; recent EMU Homecoming; upcoming JMU Homecoming; recent and upcoming speaking engagements; and tours to the Navigation Center from other localities;

10. Boards and Commissions

10.a. Planning Commission

A motion was made by Council Member Dent, seconded by Council Member Alsaadun, to appoint Stanley Jezior to the Planning Commission to a first term to expire on October 14, 2029. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

10.b. Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA)

A motion was made by Council Member Dent, seconded by Council Member Alsaadun, to appoint Todd Alexander to the Board of Zoning Appeals to a partial term to expire on March 20, 2029. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

10.c. Social Services Advisory Board

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Vice Mayor Dent, to appoint Tinangeles Abreu to the Social Services Board to a 1st term to expire on October 14, 2029. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

10.d. Board of Building Code Appeals

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Council Member Alsaadun, to appoint Gerlad Bland and Hunter Woodard to the Board of Building Code Appeals to 1st terms to expire on October 14, 2028. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

11. Closed Session

12. Adjournment

At 9:24 p.m., there being no further business and on motion adopted, the meeting was adjourned.

CITY CLERK

MAYOR