

Kinston City Council



MINUTES

March 2, 2021

Agenda
Kinston City Council
City Hall · 207 East King Street
Tuesday, March 2, 2021
Regular Meeting at 5:30 pm

**This meeting will be held electronically in Zoom format and viewed at
<https://www.facebook.com/KinstonCityHall>**

REGULAR MEETING

Mayor Don Hardy called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm.

Council Members' Roll Call

Present: Councilmembers Sammy Aiken, Antonio Hardy, Robert Swinson, and Mayor Pro Tem Felicia Solomon.

Present Also: Tony Sears, City Manager and James Cauley, City Attorney.

Absent: Councilmember Kristal Suggs.

Councilmember Antonio Hardy delivered the prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZEN COMMENT

Citizens seeking assistance or asking questions will be contacted by a member of the
Governing Body or by appropriate City Staff.

There are no in-person comments permitted.

**Please visit www.ci.kinston.nc.us/FormCenter/City-Clerk-Forms-11/Citizens-Comments-110
to complete and submit a Citizen Comment Form.**

James Cauley explained that any comments submitted that are related to the Public Hearing items should be held until that time.

The City Clerk read submitted citizen comments from the individuals listed below:

Ms. Jeanine Bryan, 405 W. Highland Avenue, Kinston, NC – A new relocate to the area.

Ms. Sharron Everett, 15213 Jenkins Road, Bowie, Maryland – Kinston native.

Mayor Hardy asked for the comments to be forwarded to all Council Members.

The submitted comment pages are attached in their entirety at the end of the minutes.

Adoption of the Agenda

If a Councilmember wishes to revise the agenda, the Motion to add or delete an item will be entertained prior to Adoption of the Agenda.

Councilmember Hardy requested to have Corey Povar move forward with the updates from the last meeting regarding the guidelines for the sports program for the upcoming season.

Councilmember Aiken made the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Solomon and upon a unanimous roll call vote (Councilmembers Aiken, Hardy, Swinson, and Mayor Pro Tem Solomon – Yes) of [4-0], Corey Povar was added to the agenda with an update regarding the guidelines for the sports program for the upcoming season under information and updates.

MINUTES

**Consider approval of the minutes of the City Council meeting held on February 16, 2021 ---
Debra Thompson**

Mayor Pro Tem Solomon made the motion, seconded by Councilmember Hardy and upon a unanimous roll call vote (Councilmembers Aiken, Hardy, Swinson, and Mayor Pro Tem Solomon – Yes) of [4-0], the minutes were approved.

INFORMATION AND UPDATES

1. Freedom Classic Compliance with Executive Order No. 195----- Chief Tim Dilday

Chief Dilday related that on February 16, 2021, the Council approved with the contingency of Executive Orders the Special Event Permit for the Freedom Classic. The annual collegiate baseball series to be held at Grainger Stadium on March 6-7. Governor Cooper's current Executive Order No. 195, which became effective on February 26, has raised the occupancy capacity for spectators from 100 per field to 30 percent of the posted fire capacity. On April 16th of 2020, the fire capacity for the facility was posted by Asst. Chief Ernie Davis, Kinston Fire Department at 3,410 persons. To be compliant with the current order the spectator capacity is limited to 1,023. Corey Povar stated the Freedom Classic Committee in partnership with the Parks and Recreation Department has worked to put the right volunteers in the right place to ensure safety among the participants of the Freedom Classic as well as the visitors, citizens, and players.

**2. Update of Guidelines for the Sports Program of the Upcoming Season ----- Corey Povar
(THIS ITEM WAS ADDED and MOVED TO THE ACTION AGENDA)**

Councilmember Hardy shared his concern as an official in the State of North Carolina that the surrounding counties have begun their youth and men's programs. Half of Kinston's teams are in Snow Hill, Goldsboro, and Kenansville playing ball because we have not approved them to play here in Lenoir County. He attended a meeting with the recreation directors, and they feel they have a safe plan to ensure, that by taking all the precautions possible we will avoid any outbreaks of COVID. They have reviewed the program several times and feel that they can move forward with a vote to allow the programs to move forward.

Corey Povar, Parks and Recreation Director stated basketball league play had been shied away from because they did not have the blessings to install outdoor rims. He ensured that in conjunction with Elijah Rouse at Holloway, Donald Ingram at Martin C. Freeman, and Earl Keith at Fairfield have worked to put together COVID rules and regulations that are in line with

the NC High School Athletics Association, as well as the CDC and the Governor’s new orders. As a department, they are ready to adapt to our program offerings and include basketball here in Kinston and safely move through that program, with masks being required. They will provide spaces of time throughout games for non-mask breathing (resting periods) at safe distances. We do not want to lose our local athletes to other communities. We want them to stay here at home and we will offer high-quality programs that are also safe for them.

Mayor Pro Tem Solomon gave her support 100 percent and asked if that included the reinstallation of the outdoor goals. Mr. Povar stated that it would and would be regulated. Councilmember Aiken asked what the number of outdoor goals was. Mr. Povar said it was five if the one at Southeast School was included. Ms. Solomon asked what the Governor’s Executive Order gave as the number of people could gather outside. Mr. Povar said he would have to check the specifics of the order for outside.

Mayor Hardy asked what the proposed timeline was for putting everything in place. Mr. Povar stated that he is ready to go. The advertising of the program could be as soon as tomorrow. They could look at three to four weeks of registration and then have a condensed season. Mayor Hardy asked if they were looking at possibly April. Mr. Povar said they could get some practices and games going in early April.

Councilmember Hardy made the motion, seconded by Councilmember Aiken and upon a unanimous roll call vote (Councilmembers Aiken, Hardy, Swinson, and Mayor Pro Tem Solomon – Yes) of [4-0], the decision to open the sports program in April was approved.

Mayor Pro Tem Solomon reminded Mr. Povar when looking at the guidelines. that Mr. Harvey, District Athletic Director worked closely with the NC Athletic Association and considering that a lot of the athletes would be dual (Lenoir County Public Schools and Parks and Recreation), would like for him to be considered while planning. Mr. Povar said he will make sure he is a part of the planning and ensuring that protocols are followed. Also, he will get the details on the numbers for outdoor gatherings. Chief Dilday stated that there were to be 12 guests per 1,000 sq. ft. in an outdoor physical activity/fitness area. Ms. Solomon said that she understood the primary goal was the programming and not reinstalling the outdoor goals and would like to know before they go out. Mayor Hardy asked Mr. Povar to return to Council or send an email before installation with where we are. Mr. Povar said he would, and they will move forward with the basketball program. As he moves through the registration and collects more data, he will reconvene about basketball hoops.

ACTION AGENDA

1. Conduct a Public Hearing for a Conditional Use Permit for Private Club and Bar-128 W. North Street ----- Adam Short

Adam Short, Director of Planning, Inspections, and Code Enforcement reviewed that this application was for a change of location of The Heritage. This location is zoned B-1 (Central Business District), as are all adjacent properties. The Planning Board reviewed the application, and it was approved unanimously.

James Cauley, City Attorney explained that this is a quasi-judicial proceeding with certain procedural rules. When there is opposition to an application for a Conditional Use Permit, the better practice is to defer the hearing until the Council can hear the matter in person for due process. This will allow witnesses to be sworn, and testimony to be taken with due process.

Mayor Hardy discussed continuing the Public Hearing until April 6, 2021, at 5:30 pm at Kinston Community Center.

Councilmember Hardy made the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Solomon and upon a unanimous roll call vote (Councilmembers Aiken, Hardy, Swinson, and Mayor Pro Tem Solomon – Yes) of [4-0], the continuance of the Public Hearing for a private club and bar at 128 W, North Street to April 6, 2021, at 5:30 pm at Kinston Community Center located at 2602 W. Vernon Avenue was approved.

2. Conduct a Public Hearing for Conditional Use Permit for Multi-Family Apartments-North Queen Street ----- Adam Short

Adam Short, Director of Planning, Inspections, and Code Enforcement stated that the request was by Traci Dusenberry on behalf of Halcon Companies to acquire a Conditional Use Permit for multi-family apartments. Zoning on the property is Office & Institutional which allows for multi-family apartments by Conditional Use Permit. Halcon Companies has a prior record of developments in several North Carolina and Virginia communities (Elizabeth City, Greenville). The units’ breaker is about 64 for the 5-acre portion that they plan to develop. They do intend to subdivide the 8-acre portion and develop a 5-acre lot. The adjacent uses are to the North B-1 (General Business/Commercial-Social Security Office); South R-A6 (Residential/ Vacant Agricultural Land); East- R-A6 (Educational-Kinston High School); and West (Office/Institutional and Office/Residential). The Planning Board reviewed the application, and it was approved unanimously. The applicant submitted a site plan, the proposed name is Riverstone Crossing at the Neuse. Other documents are included in the packet including a layout of all the units (1st, 2nd, and 3rd-floor units).

Mayor Hardy asked for clarification on the specific location and Mr. Short shared the location on-screen and said it was behind Atlantic Medical. Mr. Sears noted that this is only a portion of the acreage. Mr. Short stated this was the eastern portion.

Traci Dusenberry was in attendance via Zoom representing the Conditional Use Permit applicant.

Councilmember Aiken asked if there was anyone present from the developer and asked if the date that is set would affect them. Ms. Dusenberry stated that their time frame was to have the completed zoning by May 13th. If the second meeting was completed they would be able to meet their timeline for financing.

Mayor Pro Tem Solomon asked if the residents on Greenmead Drive received the notice; was that within the 200 feet. Mr. Short said they were outside the 200 feet and only touches into the high school property on the eastern and southern side.

Mr. Cauley reminded everyone that these are all questions that should be addressed at the Public Hearing.

Mayor Pro Tem asked Mr. Short that for the sake of clarity, to explain why they did not receive a notice. Mr. Short shared that our ordinance requires that we notify anyone within 200 ft. under consideration of a Conditional Use Permit, to receive notifications. Mr. Sears commented that it does not mean that you are not allowed to come to the Public Hearing, and you are not allowed to speak. If you have questions, please call 252-939-3269. This information is regarding the legal requirement for mailings. Mr. Short stated for anyone that questions, why it is 200 feet, is because it is in the ordinance and if he did anything other, it would make him arbitrary and is also a part of why it is advertised in the newspaper as well. Those are the only mechanisms that the State of North Carolina allows.

Ms. Dusenberry asked if we met in person, were we required to have two meetings. Mr. Cauley answered that if the meeting was held in person, it would not require a second meeting being that the 24-hour rule for public comments does not apply. The Council can decide the same night of the hearing when it is in person.

Councilmember Swinson made the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Solomon and upon a unanimous roll call vote (Councilmembers Aiken, Hardy, Swinson, and Mayor Pro Tem Solomon – Yes) of [4-0], the continuance of the Public Hearing for multi-family apartments on North Queen Street to April 6, 2021, at 5:30 pm at Kinston Community Center located at 2602 W. Vernon Avenue was approved.

3. Conduct a Public Hearing for DOJ Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant, 2020-DJ-BX-0828----- Chief Tim Dilday

Chief Dilday, Kinston Police Department stated he was presenting for Public Hearing a DOJ Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant 2020-Supplemental Equipment. The City of Kinston, in conjunction with Lenoir County, has received notice of eligibility and approval for funding for \$21,451 to be divided equally at \$10,725.50 for each agency. Funds are designated for the acquisition of supplemental equipment to be used for the department’s response to critical incidents.

Mayor Hardy opened the Public Hearing at 6:30 pm.

There was no one to speak in favor of or opposition to and the Public Hearing will continue until March 16, 2021.

The Public Hearing Comment form will remain open for 24 hours and close at 6:30 pm on March 3, 2021.

4. Conduct a Public Hearing for DOJ Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding Program, 2020VD-BX-0730----- Chief Tim Dilday

Chief Dilday, Kinston Police Department stated he was presenting for Public Hearing a DOJ Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant 2020-Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding Program. The City of Kinston has received notice of eligibility and

approval for funding for \$79,924 for the acquisition of supplemental equipment related to the Police Department’s effort in combating the detrimental effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds are designated to supplement needed PPE for the department personnel as well as portable, programmable, electronic signs to assist the community with ongoing relief efforts.

Mayor Hardy opened the Public Hearing at 6:32 pm.

There was no one to speak in favor of or opposition to and the Public Hearing will continue until March 16, 2021.

The Public Hearing Comment form will remain open for 24 hours and close at 6:32 pm on March 3, 2021.

5. Consider Approval of a Temporary License Agreement Between the City and Duke Energy Progress, LLC-Seven Springs Project ----- Rhonda Barwick

Rhonda Barwick, Public Services Director introduced the project. The plan is to improve the reliability of two distribution lines that originate at their substation, located beside our original POD off Atlantic Avenue. They plan to place portions of these lines underground and have requested the temporary use of City property located across the river near the fishing pond on the Neuseway Nature Center property. Ms. Barwick referenced that the packet contained a map showing the location of the bore pit (100 x 100 feet) and the temporary license agreement. Corey. Povar, Recreation Director, and staff member Bobby Cox are aware of the project. The agreement is being reviewed by the City Attorney and asked if it is approved tonight to specify in the motion that it is pending the City Attorney’s approval. Duke Progress made a similar request to Lenoir County Commissioners on Monday because they have property in the area as well.

There are two representatives participating tonight from Duke Energy Progress and they are Millie Chalk, District Manager of Government and Community Relations and Lee Burton, Project Manager.

Ms. Millie Chalk stated they are trying to do all they can to beef up their grid to deal with these uncertain weather events and growing population. She said that they were trying to improve the emergency response to the area. This is a grid improvement project for the area, bot Kinston and Lenoir County. The two power lines start at the Kinston 115 substation and move across the Neuse River. As it moves across this area, there are wetlands and in an attempt to restore power after a major storm it requires track equipment, it is difficult and slows the progress. The strategy is to put it underground and minimize the need to utilize the track equipment. The project impacts about 2,300 customers and they need the lease document that allows them to lease part of the property to utilize as a storage area for equipment while the work is being done.

Mr. Lee Burton stated this is a reliability project. The purpose is to reduce the duration of the outages when they occur. For the majority of the year, the lines that cross the river are inaccessible and the power could be out for a considerable amount of time while you get specialized equipment in there. They are proposing an underground feed to be done by boring from the substation to the south side of the river. The area in question for the temporary lease

agreement is a 100x100 foot area to set up boring equipment. This is a specialized job to complete a bore of this length in one shot. This area is needed to stage the equipment and set up the bore. A temporary access road will be put in around the construction site to make sure access to the development property and use of the pond. Mayor Hardy asked if this would affect 2,300 customers to enhance and improve.

Mayor Pro Tem Solomon asked Mr. Cauley asked how long it would take to create the lease agreement. Mr. Cauley stated he has reviewed the agreement provided by Duke Energy and from the drawing he wanted to know if there was any impairment of access issue that has been explained. He also wanted to make sure the road would be put back in the condition that it is in before the bore, which is addressed in the document. He has completed his review and is satisfied.

Councilmember Hardy asked if this was a permanent or temporary lease. Mr. Cauley stated it runs through the end of 2021. Mr. Lee shared that it is written through the end of the year. The equipment will be set up in this area for the bore for approximately a month, and they are targeting somewhere in June through September to do this work.

Councilmember Aiken asked if there were wetlands on both sides of the river. Mr. Burton said they will use a reclaimer that pumps the spoils back into the ground. There will not be a lot of sediment and any sediment will be controlled back into that site.

Mayor Pro Tem Solomon made the motion, seconded by Councilmember Swinson and upon a unanimous roll call vote (Councilmembers Aiken, Hardy, Swinson, and Mayor Pro Tem Solomon – Yes) of [4-0], the temporary license agreement between the City and Duke Energy Progress, LLC-Seven Springs Project was approved.

6. Consider Consensus for Candidates for 2021 Road Improvement Project-----Rhonda Barwick

Rhonda Barwick, Public Services Director stated this year's General Fund Budget included \$200,000, which was set aside for street resurfacing, and \$50,000 for the next section of Hardee Road. Each year when the candidates are presented to the Council, we review the 2017 Street Conditions Survey used as a tool to determine the relative condition of our paved city streets. The streets listed for this year are Lenoir Avenue from Independent Street to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard-delayed to coincide with the completion of utility work and Doctors Drive from Heritage to Cambridge Apartments-delayed to allow construction traffic to end on the new portion of Doctors Drive to end. Gordon Street from MLK to Vance Street and Vance Street to Adkin Street finish out the \$200,000. There is \$50,000 appropriated for the next phase of Hardee Road. Since we completed from Hardee from Hampton down the hill towards Elizabeth, we need to go back North towards Crawford and Sedgfield. It is doubtful we will be able to complete to Hodges and Sedgfield, but based on the bids we will do as far as we can. The total is \$259,929. That is before the bids and is our estimate and we will adjust the actual commitment once the bids are received. Ms. Barwick asked for the Council's consensus on if these were the roads they would like to have bid on this year and included in the 2021 improvement project.

Councilmember Hardy asked how the flooding of Doctors Drive was going to affect resurfacing. Ms. Barwick stated that the ones presented tonight are for resurfacing.

Councilmember Aiken asked if the State ever fixed the drainage problem on the corner going into Doctors Drive. Ms. Barwick said the Adkin is where the flooding is coming from was being addressed by the Environmental Defense Fund. Mr. Sears related that he and the Mayor have a meeting with them tomorrow and they have been doing preliminary work to understand what the problem is so they can propose a solution. Mayor Hardy said and to try to help figure out where we could get the funding. Councilmember Hardy suggested holding off on Doctors Drive until we find out the preliminaries of what the meeting entails. Mayor Hardy stated he did not think the conversation tomorrow would have any effect on the resurfacing of the roadway. It will talk about Adkin Branch; how to mitigate flooding moving forward and to use Kinston as a model to put something in place.

Councilmember Aiken if there was a time frame for the extension of Doctors Drive. Ms. Barwick stated we have a contractor, the Council awarded that to Rick Bostic Construction, and he should have that finished in June. Mr. Aiken shared that they are approached every day. He noted that we are aware of the problem, but we have to have funding. Mayor Pro Tem Solomon added that in the public comments heard tonight, she was glad to hear them mention road. It affirms that we are targeting those things that are important to citizens. We are doing the best we can with as little as we have. Ms. Barwick reminded everyone that last year the city did over \$520,000 worth of resurfacing. That is not something we can do every year, but we are putting as much in as we can.

Councilmember Swinson asked where Woodview fell on the list for resurfacing. Ms. Barwick stated it was not on the shortlist and she would have to look through the report to see what score it received.

Councilmember Swinson made the motion, seconded by Councilmember Aiken and upon a unanimous roll call vote (Councilmembers Aiken, Hardy, Swinson, and Mayor Pro Tem Solomon – Yes) of [4-0], the candidates for 2021 Road Improvement Project were approved.

7. Consider Authorizing Recruitment and Hire-Public Services Department -----Rhonda Barwick

Rhonda Barwick, Public Services Director shared that the Fleet Maintenance Superintendent has announced his retirement. This Fleet Maintenance takes care of the vehicles for the City; roughly 700-800 pieces of equipment and vehicles that they take care of and this position supervises the mechanics.

Councilmember Swinson made the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Solomon and upon a unanimous roll call vote (Councilmembers Aiken, Hardy, Swinson, and Mayor Pro Tem Solomon – Yes) of [4-0], authorization for recruitment and hiring of the Fleet Maintenance Superintendent was approved.

8. Consider Authorizing Recruitment and Hire-Parks and Recreation Department -- Corey Povar

Corey Povar, Parks and Recreation Director related that he has several vacant positions with only one being a full-time position (Maintenance Worker I) and that the gentleman has taken another job. The majority of the positions are in response to the program offerings. There will

be practices and games going on in the County with the positions having been cleared due to inactivity. In addition to those, there are two Center Assistants at the Kinston Community Center requests, as well as a lifeguard. He said that there was a Center Assistant at Mock Gym and a Field Supervisor for the City; three Field Supervisors for the County, and two Center Assistants and a Lifeguard for Kinston Community Center. Councilmember Hardy asked if these positions were in addition to the positions he had vacant before. Mr. Povar said they were additional, and they were in the process of filling the three positions at Holloway, Fairfield, and Martin C. Freeman.

Councilmember Aiken asked if the lifeguards will be hired by us or the management team. Mr. Povar said this position will be hired by the Kinston Community Center and when we begin to look at the summer season with Holloway. Lots that are at Kinston Community Center at this time typically transition to the water park or Swim Club employee.

Councilmember Swinson made the motion, seconded by Councilmember Hardy and upon a unanimous roll call vote (Councilmembers Aiken, Hardy, Swinson, and Mayor Pro Tem Solomon – Yes) of [4-0], authorization for recruitment and hiring of vacancies for Parks and Recreation was approved.

9. Update of Guidelines for the Sports Program of the Upcoming Season ----- Corey Povar (THIS ITEM WAS ADDED AND VOTED ON UNDER INFORMATION/UPDATES)

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Tony Sears, City Manager related that he had an update from Adam Short and Corey Povar on the Holloway grant.

Adam Short, Director of Planning, Inspections, and Code Enforcement stated that they have encountered some delays in the bid process dealing with CDBG and limited staff on their end, and some COVID-related things that put us to the point where we had to decide. While we are ready to select a contractor and move forward with the project, the timing is such that if we did move forward, it would close the pool through the majority of this summer season. The plan is to get through the summer season with the pool as it is, select a contractor in the next month or so, and have them ready to roll as soon as the pool closes at the end of the summer. We will then send them to work, and we should be able to finish without any closures or interruption to service. Mr. Short said that in talking to Corey and Parks and Rec they feel we can get through this season sufficiently to make it work at Holloway. In the long-term, once we do the project we will have a pool that will last another 25-30 years that we can be proud of. He will come back in the next month or so to formally select the contractor. Mr. Povar stated he also felt that in the interest of having some we could be proud of many years to come and not impeding on the upcoming pool season, this is the best plan.

Mr. Sears requested a closed session for NC General Statute 143-318.11 (a) (4) – Real Property.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

There was no City Attorney's report.

MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBER REPORTS

Councilmember Hardy shared that on Friday he found out that anyone that has an appointment for vaccination could ride Lenoir County Transit for free to and from any location giving vaccinations. Mr. Hardy stated he was glad that the City and County could work together to achieve this goal.

Councilmember Hardy also stated he did not know who was responsible for the electrical boxes at Bill Fay Park, but he was asked by some citizens to address that they noticed some of the boxes open and the kids were playing with the wires. Mr. Sears asked that anyone noticing that to please not wait for Council Meeting, but please feel free to reach out to him or Corey because that is a safety issue and should be addressed immediately. Mr. Hardy reminded everyone that COVID-19 was not over and to please continue to follow the 3-W's.

Mayor Pro Tem Solomon thanked Pam Brown, Lenoir County Health Department, the local chapter of the NAACP, and Temple of Deliverance Worship Center for hosting a vaccination clinic at Temple of Deliverance on February 17th. Those 100 citizens will come back on March 17th for a vaccination/birthday celebration (Ms. Solomon's birthday). Also, there will be another vaccination clinic at Temple of Deliverance on March 25th that by that time we will have moved to the phase that the essential workers will be getting vaccinations.

Mayor Hardy shared that on March 9th from 11 am-2 pm there will be COVID-19 testing, vaccinations, and food giveaway at Grainger Stadium for those who are eligible and wanting to be vaccinated. He also thanked the City employees and the Council for all they do. He stressed that we needed to continue wearing our masks even after we have been vaccinated. Mayor Hardy said he is looking forward to the Johnson & Johnson doses coming out later this week. He encouraged anyone that wanted a shot, to please come out even if you were not in the tier, they would try to help you or get you scheduled.

Councilmember Swinson stated that there were two business owners on Blount Street calling regarding a noise ordinance. He wanted to have an opportunity to work with Chief Dilday, Mr. Short, and Mr. Steele to try to come up with a resolution that is peaceful and doable for both parties.

Mayor Pro Tem Solomon stated that about a week ago she saw something that she did not take the time to read. She related that the local politicians' seats were non-partisan. When they put their hands to the work they do not do so as Republicans, as Democrats, or as Independents. It is as citizens of Lenoir County. Ms. Solomon said without any question she serves with City employees and fellow elected officials and whatever role they serve in the community they serve with giving

hearts. Their constant pleas were for individuals to voice their concerns, therefore, as elected officials and City employees, they will never run away from taking care of the people that they serve. The work done is not limited to meeting with customers. She addressed the sanitation workers and stated that to her they do more than just pick up trash. To our law enforcement, as we work to build a brand of who they are to the people of the community; our department of Public Safety, our work is not limited to just arresting criminals. She shouted out to the Kinston Police Department for putting another SRO in the elementary schools that were put there not to target children, but to build healthy relationships. When it comes to things such as HIPPA, we do not know everyone that the Executive Orders that Governor Cooper laid out last spring, we do not know about other individuals and she wanted to specifically speak to the City Clerk. The orders spoke to people with pre-existing conditions; if they could do the work from home, they can do the work effectively from home. It is about us doing the best work possible. If there had been any concerns made, the City Manager would have brought them to the Council, and members of the community would have spoken to Council members. Ms. Solomon related to the members of the community to remember that we are on a journey together. When we consider the fact that the City Clerk was hospitalized for five days and when you think about pre-existing conditions it is something to consider. Ms. Solomon shared that they make no regrets for trying to take care of the people they love. Councilmember Aiken commented on an article that referenced that the Council was afraid to meet in person, he shared that being on zoom has its advantages. Mr. Aiken noted that looking at the Facebook viewership, we get more viewers than we had when it was on channel 2. Ms. Solomon commented that she loves the city, the county, and the people she works with. We can always accomplish more together. Mayor Hardy expressed his thanks for the comments and hopes that maybe this would touch the hearts and help others to understand their approach.

Councilmember Aiken made the motion, seconded by Councilmember Hardy and upon a unanimous roll call vote (Councilmembers Aiken, Hardy, Swinson, and Mayor Pro Tem Solomon – Yes) of [4-0], the Council approved entering closed session at 7:40 pm.

CLOSED SESSION

Pursuant to NC General Statutes 143-318.11 (a) (3) – Attorney-Client Privilege and NC General Statute 143-318.11 (a) 5) – Real Property, a closed session was entered at 7:40 pm.

Mayor Pro Tem Solomon made the motion, seconded by Councilmember Aiken and upon a unanimous roll call vote (Councilmembers Aiken, Hardy, Swinson, and Mayor Pro Tem Solomon – Yes) of [4-0], the council returned to the regular meeting at 8:44 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Swinson made the motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Solomon and upon a unanimous roll call vote (Councilmembers Aiken, Hardy, Swinson, and Mayor Pro Tem Solomon – Yes) of [4-0], the City of Kinston Council Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Thompson, City Clerk