Minutes for September 22, 2026, City Council Meeting

September 17, 2026, Agenda Briefing Worksession - 11:00 a.m.

Present

Mayor Esther E. Manheimer, Presiding; Vice-Mayor S. Antanette Mosley; Councilman Bo Hess; Councilwoman Kim Roney; Councilwoman Sage Turner; Councilwoman Maggie Ullman; City Manager DK Wesley; City Attorney Brad Branham; and City Clerk Magdalen Burleson

Absent

Councilwoman Sheneika Smith.

Summary

City Council held an agenda briefing worksession to discuss the upcoming and future agenda items. In addition, City Council reviewed upcoming City Council committees that will be taking place during the next two weeks.

At 11:25 a.m., Mayor Manheimer adjourned the agenda briefing worksession.

September 22, 2026 - Regular City Council Formal Meeting - 5:00 p.m

Present

Mayor Esther E. Manheimer, Presiding; Vice-Mayor S. Antanette Mosley; Councilman Bo Hess; Councilwoman Kim Roney; Councilwoman Sheneika Smith; Councilwoman Sage Turner; City Manager DK Wesley; City Attorney Brad Branham; and City Clerk Magdalen Burleson

Absent

Councilwoman Maggie Ullman

Pledge Of Allegiance

Mayor Manheimer led City Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Manheimer read a statement regarding Chamber decorum.

I. Proclamations: None

II. Consent Agenda:

A. Approval of the combined minutes of the agenda briefing worksession held on September 3, 2026, and the formal meeting held on September 8, 2026

B. Resolution Number 26-189 - Resolution authorizing the Water Resources Department to accept $403,000 in Community Development Block Grant funding for replacement of single-family residential properties lead and galvanized iron pipe service lines categorized for replacement per Environment Protection Agency's Lead and Copper Rule Improvements - Resolution Book No. 47 - Page 13

Ordinance No. 5262- Budget amendment for replacement of single-family residential properties lead and galvanized iron pipe service lines categorized for replacement per Environment Protection Agency's Lead and Copper Rule Improvements - Ordinance Book No. 37 - Page 140

- The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI) mandate requires all public water utilities to identify and replace all lead service lines, as well as galvanized iron service lines that are or were previously downstream of lead components, by the conclusion of calendar year 2038.
- While the City has identified no lead service lines within its system to date, historical record gaps preclude verifying whether certain customer-owned galvanized iron service lines were ever positioned downstream of lead materials.
- In February 2026, the Water Resources Department submitted an application for FY26/27 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding; the Housing and Community Development Committee subsequently approved an allocation of $403,000 to support service line replacement efforts.
- On June 9th, 2026 Council approved the CDBG Annual Action Plan which included $403,000 in the CDBG Fund for this work. Adoption of a budget amendment is now necessary to facilitate the receipt and appropriation of these grant funds in the Water Fund.
- Securing this funding will enable a proactive initiative to mitigate lead exposure risks for low-income homeowners, upgrading essential residential water infrastructure with an anticipated operational lifespan exceeding 50 years.

- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the Water Resources Department to accept $403,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for replacement of single-family residential properties lead and galvanized iron pipe service lines categorized for replacement per EPA's Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI); and the associated budget amendment, in the amount of $403,000.

C. Resolution Number 26-190 - Resolution authorizing the City Manager to renew and fund an additional year of an existing contract with Peek Travel, Inc. for software licensing and maintenance for the WNC Nature Center Ticketing, Registration and Point of Sale - Resolution Book No. 47 - Page 14

- On March 22, 2023 the WNC Nature Center Education Department went live with ACME software solutions for summer camp registration, shortly followed by the Admissions Office with Point-of-Sale ticketing on May 3, 2023.
- ACME Technologies, Inc was acquired by Peek Travel, Inc. in November of 2025.
- This contract renewal would allow the WNC Nature Center to continue offering admissions to the award winning facility.
- Currently the Peek software is providing guest and membership tracking, with both online ticket sales and at the admissions office, summer camp registration
- Motion to adopt a resolution to authorize the City Manager to renew and fund for one year the contract with Peek Travel Inc. for an additional $24,400.00 (making the lifetime amount of this contract total $138,000.00) and to execute any documents necessary to effect this funding and renewal.and logging guest zip codes.

D. Resolution Number 26-292 - Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract with the Asheville City Schools Foundation for the 2026- 2027 In Real Life After-School Program for Asheville Middle School students - Resolution Book No. 47 - Page 15

- The In Real Life (IRL) initiative delivers high-quality, hands-on, and inclusive after-school experiences to Asheville Middle School students.
- Since at least 2019, the after-school model has maintained a consistent partnership with the City of Asheville for financial sustainability.
- As a comprehensive programmatic resource, IRL offers dependable student support and coordinates essential transportation services through Asheville City Schools.
- The program fosters youth development by providing mentorship opportunities while cultivating advanced problem-solving capabilities and critical thinking proficiencies.
- IRL remains dedicated to facilitating equitable access that empowers students to discover personal interests and spark creative innovation.
- During the 2025-2026 academic term, the program successfully engaged a total of 203 students.
- Motion to authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement with Asheville

City Schools Foundation to provide funding in the amount of $45,000 for the after-school program, Real Life.

E. Resolution Number 26-192 - Resolution to permit the possession and consumption of malt beverages and/or unfortified wine at the Lovely Asheville Annual Fall Festival on October 10 and 11, 2026 - Resolution Book No. 47 - Page 16

- N. C. Gen. Stat. sec. 18B-300(c) authorizes the City by ordinance to regulate or prohibit the consumption and/or possession of open containers of malt beverages and unfortified wine on public streets and property owned, occupied, or controlled by the City and to regulate or prohibit the possession of malt beverages and unfortified wine on public streets, alleys or parking lots which are temporarily closed to regular traffic for special events.
- The City Council of the City of Asheville has adopted an ordinance pursuant to that statutory authority; and that ordinance, codified as Section 11-11 in the Code of Ordinances of the City of Asheville, provides that the City Council may adopt a resolution making other provisions for the possession of malt beverages and/or unfortified wine at a special event or community festival.
- Asheville Creative Arts has requested that City Council permit them to serve beer and/or unfortified wine at the Lovely Asheville Annual Fall Festival on October 10 & 11, 2026, in Pack Square Park, and to allow consumption at the event.
- Alcohol boundaries are defined as per the accompanying event site map. Approval would allow fundraising opportunities for the sponsoring nonprofit organization. No negative fiscal impacts have been identified.
- Motion to adopt a resolution to permit the possession and consumption of malt beverages and/or unfortified wine at the Lovely Asheville Annual Fall Festival.

F. Resolution Number 26-193 - Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute an interlocal agreement between the City of Asheville and the County of Buncombe to administer the General Assistance Program - Resolution Book No. 48 - Page 19

- From FY23 through FY26, the City of Asheville and Buncombe County jointly funded the Homeowner Grant Program, managed by the County, which was designed to assist homeowners of low and moderate income.
- Starting in FY27, the City and County have agreed to instead invest in the County's General Assistance Program, an economic public assistance program designed to assist Buncombe County residents with income at or below 200% Federal Poverty Level ("FPL").
- The County will contribute $290,000 and the City will contribute $75,000.
- Grants awarded under the Program shall be funded as follows:
    - Maximum of $350 for households with income at 131-200% FPL regardless of household size.
    - Maximum of $500 for households with income at or below 130% FPL regardless of household size.
- City funding will only be available to eligible grant applicants whose qualifying residence is located within the territorial jurisdiction of the City.
- Eligible households may, in their discretion, choose to have grant funds

applied directly to the allowable bill that best supports their needs, such as housing or utility bill costs.
- The City will provide the County $75,000 and the County will operate the program.
- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the execution of an interlocal agreement between the City of Asheville and the County of Buncombe to administer the General Assistance Program.

G. Resolution Number 26-194 - Resolution authorizing the City Manager to accept the N.C. Dept. of Transportation - Integrated Mobility Division for Federal Transit Administration Section 5303 Metropolitan Planning Program annual funding in the amount of $189,839 for Fiscal Year 2027, and enter into any agreements necessary for grant acceptance - Resolution Book No. 47 - Page 20

- The City applies annually to the North Carolina Department of Transportation - Integrated Mobility Division to receive Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5303 funds (Metropolitan Planning Program).
- The City uses the Section 5303 funding to fund existing transit planning activities such as grant management, administration, and reporting; short and long-range transit planning; analyses of transit operations; and required semi-annual DBE program preparation and reporting.
- The funds supplement the Transit Division personnel budget, which includes the Transit Division Manager and additional Transit Division staff positions.
- The total grant funding is allocated at $189,839. Of this anticipated funding, the Federal Transit Administration will contribute an 80% share, totaling $151,871. The remaining 20% match will be divided between the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the City of Asheville, with each entity providing a 10% contribution of $18,983 and $18,985, respectively.
- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to accept the North Carolina Department of Transportation - Integrated Mobility Division for Federal Transit Administration Section 5303 Metropolitan Planning Program annual funding in the amount of $189,839 for Fiscal Year 2027, and to enter into any agreements necessary for grant acceptance.

H. Resolution Number 26-195 - Resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for the N.C. Dept. of Transportation (NCDOT) Public Transit Apprenticeship Grant Program and if awarded, authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement with NCDOT to fund the Apprenticeship for Fiscal Year 2028 and to expend funding on the local match or balance of project costs - Resolution Book No. 47 - Page 21

- The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Integrated Mobility Division (IMD) manages an annual Public Transit Apprenticeship Grant Program that places recent university graduates in municipal transit agencies for one year. The program reimburses 90% of eligible expenses up to set maximum line-item limits, requiring a 10% local match from the host transit system. Sponsor systems determine apprentice wages, benefits, and

travel allowances within these maximum limitations. The allowable expenses are structured as follows:
    - Salary / Wages: Subject to a maximum state reimbursement of $44,928, paired with a required 10% local match of $4,992, resulting in a total allowable cost of $49,920 (equivalent to a maximum hourly rate of $24.00/hr.).
    - FICA / Social Security Contributions: Subject to a maximum state reimbursement of $3,437, paired with a required 10% local match of $382, resulting in a total allowable cost of $3,819.
    - Travel Allowances: Subject to a maximum state reimbursement of $900, paired with a required 10% local match of $100, resulting in a total allowable cost of $1,000.
    - Total Combined Funding: Reflects a maximum state contribution of $49,265 and a 10% local match of $5,474, culminating in a comprehensive project budget of $54,739.
- The above detailed figures encompass 100% of the maximum allowable apprenticeship operational costs eligible for cost-sharing under the NCDOT grant guidelines. Any expenditure exceeding these thresholds must be borne exclusively by the City of Asheville.
- The City has participated in this program several times over the last decade.
- The transit apprentice would work within the Transit Division of the Transportation Department and would assist the division with ongoing work program items related to transit service. The apprentice is also required by the NCDOT to prepare a research report at the end of the apprenticeship.
- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Public Transit Apprenticeship Grant Program and, if awarded, authorize the City Manager accept the funds, enter into any agreement with NCDOT to fund the Apprenticeship for Fiscal Year (FY) 2028, and to expend funding on the local match or balance of project costs.

I. Resolution Number 26-196 - Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a three-year General Services Agreement with Raynetta and Company Enterprises, LLC for professional facility cleaning services at eight municipal facility locations - Resolution Book No. 47 - Page 22

- The City of Asheville initiated a procurement process for professional cleaning services across eight (8) municipal facilities to reduce internal payroll expenses and boost operational efficiency.
- The contract spans a variety of municipal properties, including critical public safety facilities such as Asheville Police Department administrative offices, several City fire stations, and additional general public administration buildings.
- Under this initiative, a specialized external vendor will perform comprehensive cleaning, sanitation, and routine facility maintenance to maintain safe, hygienic, and professional spaces for staff and visitors.
- Transitioning these responsibilities to a vendor enables centralized oversight and optimized personnel allocation, ensuring high-traffic public safety hubs

and city offices uphold strict health and safety standards while driving long-term cost savings.
- Motion authorizing the City Manager to execute a three-year General Services Agreement with Raynetta and Company Enterprises, LLC for professional facility cleaning services at eight municipal locations. The agreement is for an annual amount of $56,300, with a 3% escalator for year three with a total contract value not to exceed $174,017.67 for the three-year term.

When Mayor Manheimer asked for public comment on the Consent Agenda, no one spoke.

Councilwoman Roney moved for the adoption of the Consent Agenda. This motion was seconded by Councilwoman Turner and carried unanimously.

III. Presentations & Reports:

Manager's Report - Recovery Update: Preparedness and Progress

City Manager Wesley presented a video where members of our four Recovery Boards explained the City's preparedness and progress from Tropical Storm Helene to date and how we are turning tragedy into opportunity.

IV. Public Hearings:

A. Public Hearing on the Substantial Amendment to the HOME-ARP Allocation Plan

Community Development Division Manager James Shelton said that this is the consideration of a public hearing approving the substantial amendment to the HOME-ARP Allocation Plan. This public hearing was advertised on September 11, 2026.

- The City's Community Development Division, in collaboration with the Asheville Regional Housing Consortium (ARHC), developed the HOME-ARP Allocation Plan, which guides the allocation of funds aimed at mitigating homelessness and fulfilling regional housing needs.
- The proposed substantial amendment revises the HOME-ARP Allocation Plan to add preferences and referral methods designed to address the increased need for housing assistance following Hurricane Helene.
- The amendment establishes a preference for individuals and families experiencing homelessness, including those experiencing homelessness for the first time as a result of Hurricane Helene, and incorporates the Coordinated Entry system and other eligible referral sources to ensure assistance is targeted to households with the greatest need.
- The ARHC voted unanimously to approve the amended Allocation Plan on August 12, 2026.

- Public Comment period opened August 31, 2026 and will remain open until October 2, 2026. A draft HOME-ARP Substantial Amendment is available on the City's Community Development website and a Public Notice was announced on August 30, 2026 via the Asheville Citizens Times.
- All public comments will be brought to the City Council on October 13, 2026 as part of the final approval of the HOME-ARP Allocation Plan Substantial Amendment.

Mr. Shelton presented the following key takeaways from his presentation: (1) The City of Asheville is the lead entity for the Asheville Regional Housing Consortium (ARHC) and administers the HOME program on its behalf; (2) In 2021, ARHC received a one-time $4.7 million allocation from the HOME-American Rescue Plan (HOME-ARP); (3) Funds must be invested in accordance with the HOME-ARP Allocation Plan that was adopted in 2023; and (4) The ARHC and City staff recommend making several substantial amendments to the Allocation Plan that will better align the City's HOME-ARP Program with our current context - (a) Expanding scope of Supportive Services to include short-term rental assistance; (b) Setting a preference for serving those experiencing homelessness, particularly those experiencing homelessness for the first time after Helene; and (c) Electing to use the Coordinated Entry system as the referral method for managing beneficiary/tenant selection.

Regarding the HOME-ARP, (1) In 2021, Congress appropriated $5 billion in funds for the HOME Investment Partnerships Program – American Rescue Plan (HOME-ARP) to address the need for homelessness assistance and supportive services - Not ARPA; (2) The City of Asheville is the lead entity for the Asheville Regional Housing Consortium (a) ARHC: consisting of counties and municipalities within Madison, Buncombe, Henderson, and Transylvania; and (b) We receive an annual entitlement grant from HUD's HOME program; (3) ARHC received a one-time $4.7 million allocation; and (4) Funds must be fully invested by August 2030.

Per the approved Asheville Regional Housing Consortium's HOME-ARP Allocation Plan, funds will be allocated as follows:

Project	Description	Funded Amount
Development of Affordable Housing	Funding for constructing, acquiring and/or rehabilitating affordable rental housing units	$3,001,943
Supportive Services	Funding for services including case management, mental health, substance abuse, rental and financial assistance	$1,000,000
Administration & Planning	City of Asheville HOME-ARP staff salaries and planning costs, professional services (13% of allocation)	$704,979

Total Funded Amount	$4,706,922

Regarding the HOME-ARP qualifying populations, grantees are allowed, but not required, to select a preference for serving one or more of the HOME-ARP Qualifying Populations. The ARHC chose not to set a preference in the current Allocation Plan

Regarding the HOME-ARP supportive services program amendment, the program design is (1) Original Focus: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services; and (2) Recommendation: (A) Broaden Eligible Services: Add short- to medium-term rental assistance and comprehensive case management to create a holistic approach that addresses both housing and stabilization needs (i) Align with Strategic Priorities: Rapid Rehousing is a core strategy identified for expansion in the CoC Strategic Plan, ensuring consistency with regional goals; and (ii) Enhance Program Impact: Incorporating financial assistance and supportive services under a Rapid Rehousing model accelerates housing placement and improves long-term outcomes for Qualifying Populations.

Regarding the HOME-ARP qualifying population preference proposed amendment, (1) Preferences (a) Establishes which qualifying population or subpopulation will have a priority in application selection for a HOME-ARP activity. Preferences allow us to better support unmet needs and services gaps; and (b) 2023 Allocation Plan did not identify; and (2) Recommendation - Add preference option for: (a) Individuals and families experiencing homelessness; (b) Particularly, individuals and families that experienced their first episode of homelessness after Helene (9/27/2024); and (c) Does not exclude other QPs (i.e. DV survivors), but means that they would be served in accordance with the preference via a waitlist.

Regarding the HOME-ARP referral methods proposed amendment, (1) Referral Methods (a) HOME-ARP allows for three types of referral methods and requires description of how Coordinated Entry systems will be used in the process, if at all; and (b) 2023 Allocation Plan did not identify use of the Coordinated Entry system' and (2) Recommendation (a) Add referral method information regarding the use of the Coordinated Entry system since those experiencing homelessness will be receive a preference in selection; (b) Coordinated Entry & Other Referral Methods will allow the Coordinated Entry system in both Asheville-Buncombe and Balance of State CoC to play a role in referrals to HOME-ARP projects; and (c) Allocation Plan will include language to reiterate HOME-ARP requirements when prioritizing waitlists and how the applicant selection to reduce audit findings for the applicant selection process.

In accordance with the Community Development Division's Citizen Participation Plan, the City will be taking public comment from August 31, 2026 - October 2, 2026: (1) Public notice published in Citizen-Times and our webpage; (2) Draft amended Allocation Plan available on our webpage. Comments can be submitted via email. In addition, public hearing comments can be submitted at this hearing; and/or mailed to the City of Asheville; Community Development Division, 5th Floor; P.O. Box 7148; Asheville, NC 28802.

In response to Mayor Manheimer, Mr. Shelton said that the wording will be changed to make sure it's understood that this is rental assistance for a short period of time.

In response to Councilman Hess, Mr. Shelton explained the coordinated entry system.

Mr. Shelton responded to Councilman Hess when he asked how much of the $1 Million of support services is for case management and how much is taken out from other concrete resources.

Mayor Manheimer opened the public hearing at 5:30 p.m.

Sarah Newberry, with Coordinated Entry, clarified the coordinated entry process.

Mayor Manheimer closed the public hearing at 5:31 p.m.

Mayor Manheimer said that consideration of the resolution approving the substantial amendment to the HOME-ARP Allocation Plan will be held on October 13, 2026.

V. Unfinished Business:

VI. New Business:

VII. Informal Discussion And Public Comment:

Several individuals spoke to City Council about various matters, some being, but are not limited to: request for City's help on their continued erosion and additional rockslides at ViewPointe Subdivision; need for stronger bear initiatives and educational resources; designate human bear conflict zones in areas experiencing recurring problems; include mold as a condition to render a dwelling unfit for human occupancy; need to address comments on social media; concerns over the renovations of the ballfield and playground at Weaver Park; need more transparency regarding the Costco development; concern about the use of body cameras and other mass surveillance; and lead with paying workers living wages.

Closed Session

At 6:11 p.m., Councilman Hess moved to go into closed session for the following reasons: (1) to prevent disclosure of information that is privileged and confidential, pursuant to the laws of North Carolina, or not considered a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes. The law that makes the information privileged and confidential is N.C.G.S. 143-318.10 (a) (1). The statutory authorization is contained in N.C.G.S. 143-318.10 (e); (2) To establish, or to instruct the City's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the City in negotiating the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease. The statutory authorization is contained in N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143-318.11(a)(5); and (3) To consult with an attorney employed or retained by the City about matters with respect to which the

attorney-client privilege between the City and its attorney must be preserved, including, but not limited to, the handling or settlement of a claim. The statutory authorization is contained in N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143-318.11 (a) (3). This motion was seconded by Councilwoman Roney and carried unanimously.

At 7:25 p.m., Councilwoman Roney moved to come out of closed session. This motion was seconded by Councilman Hess and carried unanimously.

VIII. Adjournment:

Mayor Manheimer adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

_____
Esther E. Manheimer, Mayor

_____
Magdalen Burleson, City Clerk