MINUTES
BREVARD CITY COUNCIL
Regular Meeting
October 8, 2024 – 5:30 PM

The Brevard City Council met in regular session on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall with Mayor Copelof presiding.

Present – Mayor Maureen Copelof, Mayor Pro Tem Gary Daniel, and Council Members Mac Morrow, Pamela Holder, and Lauren Wise

Absent – Aaron Baker

Staff Present – City Attorney Mack McKeller, City Manager Wilson Hooper, City Clerk Denise Hodsdon, Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Dean Luebbe, Assistant City Manager David Todd, Planning Director Paul Ray, Senior Planner Emily Brewer, Human Resources Director Kelley Craig, Communications Coordinator Becky McCann, Police Chief Tom Jordan, Fire Chief Bobby Cooper, Public Works Director Wesley Shook, Water Treatment Plant ORC Dennis Richardson, Wastewater Treatment Plant ORC Emory Owen, and Community Center Director Tyree Griffin

Press – Jon Rich, Transylvania Times

A. Welcome and Call to Order – Mayor Copelof called the meeting to order and welcomed those present.

B. Invocation –Dr. Andrew White, Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church offered an invocation.

C. Pledge of Allegiance – Mayor Copelof led the pledge of allegiance.

D. Certification of Quorum – City Clerk Denise Hodsdon certified that a quorum was present. Mr. Morrow moved, seconded by Ms. Holder to excuse Council Member Baker. The motion carried unanimously.

E. Approval of Agenda – Mr. Daniel requested to add an item regarding a Proclamation for Fire Prevention Month as Item H-3 under Certificates/Awards/ Recognition; and to add an item regarding a Resolution Authorizing the PRO Housing Grant Application to New Business as Item M-1 and to re-number the remaining items in New Business. Mr. Hooper requested to add an item regarding an amendment to the Council Calendar as Item M-5 under New Business. Mr. Wise moved, seconded by Ms. Holder to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

F. Approval of Minutes

F-1. September 16, 2024 Regular Meeting – Mr. Morrow moved, seconded by Ms. Holder to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2024 Regular Meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

G. Public Comments

Patricia Wrinkle of 39 Appletree Street said you all have done really well during this storm and I know you're all very tired. I want to thank you all. It's going to be a long haul for a lot of people, but all of our City employees stepped up and did what needed to be done and we are blessed. Also, I want to thank you for the sidewalk by the mud hole. I am very grateful for that; I use it frequently. Something I would like answered at some point is, before Helene, you were talking to builders for the Presbyterian Church property and I'm wondering if that has happened, when will we as neighbors find out so that we can go on with our lives one way or another.

H. Certificates/Awards/Recognition

H-1. Proclamation No. 2024-20 Domestic Violence Awareness Month – Mayor Copelof read the proclamation aloud and presented it to SAFE representatives Cindy Donaldson and Melissa Smith.

PROCLAMATION NO. 2024-20
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH
OCTOBER 2024

WHEREAS, intimate partner violence alone affects more than 12 million people every year; and

WHEREAS, an average of 24 people per minute are victims of rape, physical violence or stalking by an intimate partner in the United States – more than 12 million women and men over the course of a single year; and

WHEREAS, nationally one in three women and one in four men will experience some form of sexual assault in their lifetime; and

WHEREAS, almost half of all women and men in the US have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner In their lifetime; and

WHEREAS, women ages 18 to 34 generally experience the highest rates of intimate partner violence; and

WHEREAS, current or former intimate partners accounted for nearly 33% of women killed in US workplaces between 2003 and 2008; and

WHEREAS, the presence of a gun in domestic violence situations increases the risk of homicide for women by 500%; and

WHEREAS, the City of Brevard recognizes the significant impact domestic violence has on Transylvania County individuals, families, children, schools, workplaces, and places of worship; and

WHEREAS, by working together, we can build a community where intimate partner violence is not tolerated and all individuals can be safe, feel respected, and live free from abuse;

NOW, **THEREFORE**, I, Maureen Copelof, Mayor of the City of Brevard hereby proclaim the month of October 2024 as **"Domestic Violence Awareness Month"** in the City of Brevard and urge the citizens of Brevard to work together to eliminate domestic violence from our community, to keep our community members safe from this crime and to stand with survivors and victims of domestic violence.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Brevard to be affixed this 8th day of October, 2024.

Attest: Denise Hodsdon, CMC, City Clerk s/Maureen Copelof, Mayor

H-2. Proclamation No. 2024-21 Breast Cancer Awareness Month – Mayor Copelof read the proclamation aloud.

PROCLAMATION NO. 2024-21
BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH
October 2024

WHEREAS, the City of Brevard joins our nation in recognizing October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month; and

WHEREAS, breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among women in the United States, and is the second-leading cause of cancer deaths among women in North Carolina and our nation; and

WHEREAS, early detection can be an effective tool in combating breast cancer, with regular screenings preventing 15 to 30 percent of all deaths from breast cancer in women over 40; when diagnosed while still confined to the breast, the 5-year relative survival rate is 99 percent; and

WHEREAS, on average, every 2 minutes a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer in the United States; and

WHEREAS, 1 in 8 women in the United States will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime and although rare, men get breast cancer too; and

WHEREAS, in 2024 an estimated 310,720 new cases of invasive breast cancer are expected to be diagnosed in women in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, in 2024 an estimated 2,800 new cases of invasive breast cancer are expected to be diagnosed in men in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, in 2024 an estimated 42,250 women and 530 men will die from breast cancer in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, the City of Brevard encourages citizens to talk with their health care providers about regular screenings, examinations and mammograms, and to practice self-examination.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mayor Maureen Copelof and Brevard City Council, do hereby proclaim **October 2024,** as **"Breast Cancer Awareness Month"** in the City of Brevard, North Carolina, and call on all citizens to join us in recognizing and commend this observance to all citizens.

Adopted and approved this the 8th day of October, 2024.

Attest: Denise Hodsdon, CMC, City Clerk s/Maureen Copelof, Mayor

H-3. Proclamation No. 2024-22 Fire Prevention Month – Mayor Copelof read the proclamation aloud and presented it to Fire Chief Bobby Cooper.

PROCLAMATION NO. 2024-22
FIRE PREVENTION MONTH
October 2024

WHEREAS, the City of Brevard has been committed to ensuring the safety and security of all those living in and visiting Brevard; and

WHEREAS, the **2024 Fire Prevention Week theme, "Smoke alarms: Make them work for you!™,"** strives to educate everyone about the importance of having working smoke alarms in the home; and

WHEREAS, roughly three out of five fire deaths happen in homes with either no smoke alarms or with no working smoke alarms; and

WHEREAS, working smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in reported home fires almost in half; and

WHEREAS, smoke alarms sense smoke well before you can, alerting you to danger in the event of fire in which you may have as little as 2 minutes to escape safely; and

WHEREAS, Brevard residents should install smoke alarms in every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home; and

WHEREAS, Brevard residents should make sure their smoke alarms meet the needs of all their family members, including those with sensory or physical disabilities; and

WHEREAS, Brevard residents should test smoke alarms at least once a month; and

WHEREAS, the Brevard Fire Department is dedicated to reducing the occurrence of home fires and home fire injuries through prevention and protection education; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mayor Maureen Copelof and the Brevard City Council, do hereby proclaim October 2024 as Fire Prevention Month throughout this community. We urge all Brevard citizens to make sure their homes have working smoke alarms and to support the many public safety activities and efforts of Brevard's fire and emergency services.

ADOPTED and approved this the 8th day of October, 2024.

Attest: Denise Hodsdon, CMC, City Clerk s/Maureen Copelof, Mayor

I. Special Presentations – None.

J. Public Hearing(s)

J-1. Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing (PRO Housing) Federal Grant Application – Emily Brewer gave an overview of the PRO Housing grant program. A copy of her PowerPoint presentation is attached. She explained that the City's vision for this proposal is to proactively remove infrastructure barriers to

housing production and to invest in communities through preservation programs. To realize that vision, the City of Brevard is requesting $4M to complete the following activities:

- Azalea / Rhododendron Neighborhood Sewer Extension
    - Engineering design to extend sewer to the entire neighborhood; and
    - First phase of construction, including the main trunkline of the sewer infrastructure along Old Hendersonville Highway and construction of the pump station that is necessary to serve the entire neighborhood
- Extending sewer utilities to a 7.8-acre parcel on Woodland Terrace owned by Transylvania Habitat for Humanity for an affordable housing development that will feature approximately 47 cluster homes
- Housing Trust Fund Affordable Housing Preservation Programs to enable low-income homeowners to rehabilitate existing affordable housing units, improve quality and safety of the housing units, and remain in their community

Ms. Brewer noted that the purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comment that will be incorporated into the grant application. Public comment can also be submitted through the City's website, by email to her, or by contacting the Planning Department by phone to provide verbal comment.

At 6:06 p.m. Mr. Morrow moved, seconded by Mr. Wise to open the public hearing. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Participation – None.

At 6:07 p.m. Mr. Daniel moved, seconded by Mr. Morrow to close the public hearing. The motion carried unanimously.

J-2. Ordinance – Voluntary Contiguous Annexation – Jason Shepherd / 35 Verdery Avenue – Emily Brewer explained that in July, 2024 Jason Shepherd submitted a request for voluntary continuous annexation for property located at 35 Verdery Avenue, further identified by PIN 8585-28-6101-000. The parcel is zoned GR8 and is partially inside the city's corporate limits already and the petition is to annex the remainder of the parcel. The Planning Board considered this request at their September 24th meeting and unanimously recommended approval.

At 6:10 p.m. Mr. Morrow moved, seconded by Ms. Holder to open the public hearing. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Participation – None.

At 6:10 p.m. Mr. Wise moved, seconded by Ms. Holder to close the public hearing. The motion carried unanimously.

K. Consent and Information - Consent Agenda items are considered routine and are enacted by one motion. Mayor Copelof read aloud the items listed and asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Morrow moved, seconded by Ms. Holder to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

K-1. Budget Amendment – Housing Trust Fund – Purchase Agreement for $115,000

ORDINANCE NO. 2024-35
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE FY2024-2025 BUDGET.
BUDGET AMENDMENT NUMBER 25-01

SUBJECT: Budget Amendment for purchase agreement of three properties at Azalea Avenue and Old Hendersonville Highway

AGENDA INFORMATION

Agenda Location: **New Business**

Department: **Finance**
Contact: **Dean Luebbe, Assistant City Manager and Finance Director**

BRIEF SUMMARY: As detailed later in this October 8th, 2024 City of Brevard agenda (Approve Option to Purchase Three Properties in Azalea/Rhododendron Neighborhood for Potential Affordable Housing Project), the City is intending to purchase three properties at Azalea Avenue and Old Hendersonville Highway. The total purchase price is $1,100,000. At this time the City wishes to enter into a purchase agreement, with three additional one-month extensions, in the amount of $115,000.

After these expenditures, the Housing Trust Fund will have an available cash balance of approximately $250,500 and accounts receivable of $172,500. Additionally, the General Fund will be contributing an additional $148,500 to the Housing Trust Fund in the next three quarters of FY25, as budgeted in the FY25 annual City budget.

MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION: To approve Budget Amendment 25-01 as submitted, increasing the budget in expenditure account:

76-4900-7400 (Capital Outlay)	$115,000
TOTAL	**$115,000**

And increasing the budget in revenue account:

76-3990-0000 (Fund Balance Appropriated)	$115,000
TOTAL	**$115,000**

ATTACHMENTS: None.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION: Adopt as presented.

Approved and adopted this 8th day of October, 2024.

Attest: Denise Hodsdon, CMC, City Clerk s/Maureen Copelof, Mayor
Approved as to Form: Mack McKeller, City Attorney

K-2. Age-Friendly Survey Results

K-3. Council Parks, Trails & Recreation Committee Minutes – August 21, 2024

K-4. Council Finance, Human Resources & Citizen Appointment Committee Minutes – August 26, 2024

K-5. Council Downtown Master Plan Committee Minutes – August 29, 2024

L. Unfinished Business – None.

M. New Business

M-1. Resolution Authorizing PRO Housing Grant Application – Mr. Wise moved, seconded by Mr. Daniel to approve the resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-45
A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CITY STAFF TO APPLY FOR THE PATHWAYS TO REMOVING OBSTACLES TO HOUSING GRANT FOR SEWER EXTENSION AND PRESERVATION PROGRAMMING

WHEREAS, affordable and workforce housing have long been recognized as a substantial need for residents of the City of Brevard and the surrounding area; and

WHEREAS, the City of Brevard is committed to the expanding housing opportunities for all residents and is pursuing affordable housing initiatives in response; and

WHEREAS, the City has identified numerous barriers that hinds the production and preservation of affordable housing, including limited developable area, significant infrastructure constraints, high construction costs and limited local funding; and

WHEREAS, on August 13, 2024, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced a second round of funding through the Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing (PRO Housing) program; and

WHEREAS, the program is intended to highlight communities that have shown commitment to addressing the housing crisis and support projects that create long-term affordable housing; and

WHEREAS, Transylvania County was identified by HUD as a priority geography for this funding opportunity; and

WHEREAS, sewer extensions and affordable housing preservation activities serving a majority of low to moderate income residents and affordable housing preservation activities are eligible projects of the PRO Housing grant; and

WHEREAS, the PRO Housing grant applications are due October 15, 2024, with awards expected to be announced in early 2025.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BREVARD, NORTH CAROLINA THAT:

Section 01. The City of Brevard Planning Department is hereby authorized to apply for the PRO Housing grant for sewer extension projects and affordable housing preservation programming; and

Section 02. The City Manager is hereby authorized to accept the PRO Housing grant funding if awarded.

Adopted and approved this the 8th day of October, 2024.

Attest: Denise Hodsdon, CMC, City Clerk s/Maureen Copelof, Mayor

M-2. Approve Option to Purchase Three Properties in Azalea / Rhododendron Neighborhood for Potential Affordable Housing Project – Mr. Hooper explained that the PRO Housing grant program is our main housing effort, but this is a complementary effort. The City hopes to buy a nearly 3-acre parcel off of Azalea Avenue to prepare it for development of LMI housing and to do essentially the same thing for that property that we did for the Church property and hopefully have better outcomes. The owners of that property have expressed a willingness to sell, but only if the City buys their two other properties at the same time.



	Property 1	Property 2	Property 3
Parcel Number	8596-05-5538-000	8596-05-8315-000	8596-05-6391-000
Acres	2.98 ac	0.49 ac	0.35 ac
Description	Large vacant parcel on Azalea Ave	Smaller vacant parcel on Old Hendersonville Hwy	Singe-family House at 543 Old Hendersonville Hwy

Mr. Hooper explained that we could carve off a portion of the parcels on Old Hendersonville Highway to support the development we hope will occur on the larger parcel; and we could sell what portion of those parcels we don't need and reimburse ourselves the cost of buying those properties. As with the Church property we need to investigate it before we buy it, and the City must have site control via an option in order to spend public money on the site-specific feasibility analysis with DFI. The terms have been negotiated with the property owners as follows:

- A 6-month option to purchase:
  - $40,000 for the first 3 months; and if necessary
  - $20,000 for month 4
  - $25,000 for month 5
  - $30,000 for month 6
- Total purchase price is $1,100,000 and option payment will be deducted from total price if City moves forward with purchase

Mr. Hooper noted that these terms were negotiated before Tropical Storm Helene and at this time we don't know if we will be able to do the feasibility analysis in 6 months and he asked Council to authorize him to renegotiate the terms of the option agreement with the property owners. Mr. Ray added that the Housing Committee has endorsed this property acquisition with funding planned from the Housing Trust Fund and the General Fund Reserves.

Mr. Morrow moved, seconded by Ms. Holder to approve the Resolution Endorsing Terms of the Option to Purchase Properties on Azalea Avenue and Old Hendersonville Highway for Development of Affordable Housing and Authorizing its Execution. The motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-43
RESOLUTION ENDORSING TERMS OF THE OPTION TO PURCHASE PROPERTIES ON AZALEA AVENUE AND OLD HENDERSONVILLE HIGHWAY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND AUTHORIZING ITS EXECUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Brevard is committed to the expanding housing opportunities for all residents and is pursuing affordable housing initiatives in response; and

WHEREAS, the City contracted the Development Finance Initiative (DFI) to identify sites for a potential multi-family affordable housing project and identified a 2.98 acre parcel on Azalea Ave; and

WHEREAS, the vision for the property is use it for a City-supported multi-family affordable housing project and to leverage this development potential to secure funding to extend sewer to the entire Azalea / Rhododendron neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, the second part of the City's agreement with the Development Finance Initiative calls for an assessment of the selected site to determine whether it is suitable for building low-to-moderate income housing; and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the State of North Carolina prohibits public resources from being used for the benefit of a private party; and

WHEREAS, therefore, the City must have legal control over the property to legally conduct its activities; and

WHEREAS, City staff and the property owners of three properties on Azalea Avenue and Old Hendersonville Highway have negotiated an option to purchase the property agreement that gives the City control of the property for up to six months for due diligence prior to full acquisition; and

WHEREAS, City Council heard a presentation on the option to purchase agreement and its terms at its October 8, 2024, meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BREVARD, NORTH CAROLINA THAT:

Section 01. The terms of the draft option to purchase agreement presented to the City Council at its meeting on October 8, 2024 are hereby endorsed; and

Section 02. The City Manager is hereby authorized to execute the option to purchase agreement with minor modifications, as necessary.

Adopted and approved this the 8th day of October, 2024.

Attest: Denise Hodsdon, CMC, City Clerk s/ Maureen Copelof, Mayor

M-3. Approve Housing Trust Fund (HTF) Allocation and "Mini-Brooks" Act Exemption for Development Finance Initiative Phase II Work – Mr. Hooper explained that this is related to the previous item. The "Mini-Brooks" Act is a statute that gives municipalities the ability to waive competitive solicitation procedures for certain professional services such as architecture if the cost is less than $50,000. Mr. Morrow moved, seconded by Mr. Wise to approve the resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-44
RESOLUTION APPROVING HOUSING TRUST FUND APPROPRIATION FOR PHASE II FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT SERVICES AND EXEMPTING THE PROJECT FROM N.C.G.S. 143-64.31 REQUIREMENTS

WHEREAS, the Brevard Housing Trust Fund lists professional services procured for the purpose of housing creation as an eligible expense; and

WHEREAS, the second part of the City's agreement with the Development Finance Initiative calls for an assessment of the selected site to determine whether it is suitable for building low-to-moderate income housing; and

WHEREAS, City staff proposes entering into one or more contracts for professional services to assess the feasibility of the selected site; and

WHEREAS, N.C.G.S. 143-64.31 requires the initial solicitation and evaluation of firms to perform architectural, engineering, surveying, construction management at risk services, and design-build services (collectively "design services") to be based on qualifications and without regard to fee; and

WHEREAS, N.C.G.S. 143-64.32 authorizes units of local government to exempt contracts for design services from the qualifications-based selection requirements of N.C.G.S. 143-64.31 if the estimated fee is less than $50,000; and

WHEREAS, the estimated fee for design services for Phase II is less than $50,000.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BREVARD, NORTH CAROLINA THAT:

Section 01. Appropriates no more than $50,000 from the Housing Trust Fund for Phase II design services.

Section 02. The above-described project is hereby made exempt from the provisions of N.C.G.S. 143-64.31.

Section 03. This resolution shall be effective upon adoption.

Adopted and approved this the 8th day of October, 2024.

Attest: Denise Hodsdon, CMC, City Clerk s/Maureen Copelof, Mayor

M-4. Planning Board Appointment – As Chair of the Finance, Human Resources and Citizen Appointment Committee Mr. Wise reported that the Committee reviewed applications for Planning Board and unanimously recommended the appointment of Karen Darity. Ms. Holder moved, seconded by Mr. Daniel to appoint Karen Darity to the Planning Board. The motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-42
RESOLUTION APPOINTING A MEMBER TO
THE BREVARD PLANNING BOARD

WHEREAS, in Fall 2022 the City of Brevard City Council held a work retreat to reform its board/committee structure; and

WHEREAS, the Council initiated a new system for making appointments that would apply to every body to which the Council makes appointments; and

WHEREAS, the Finance, Human Resources and Citizen Appointment Committee was charged with reviewing applicants for the various boards/committees/advisory groups and making appointment recommendations to the full Council; and

WHEREAS, the City of Brevard Code of Ordinances Chapter 15 was amended by Ordinance No. 2024-14 to increase the number of Planning Board members residing within the city from four members to five members, and decreasing the number of ETJ members from three members to two members; and

WHEREAS, city staff, with the oversight of the Finance, Human Resources and Citizen Appointment Committee, conducted an open recruitment for citizens interested in serving on the Planning Board to fill two upcoming vacancies and the newly created city-appointed seat; and

WHEREAS, the Finance, Human Resources and Citizen Appointment Committee considered applications at their August 26, 2024 meeting and recommended reappointment of two current Planning Board members and agreed to extend the recruitment period for the newly added city-appointed seat to recruit more candidates; and

WHEREAS, the Finance, Human Resources and Citizen Appointment Committee considered additional applications at its meeting on September 17, 2024 and recommended appointment to the Planning Board's newly created seat.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BREVARD, NORTH CAROLINA THAT:

1) The Brevard City Council does hereby appoint Karen Darity to the Brevard Planning Board effective October 2024 and expiring in September 2024.

Adopted and approved this the 8th day of October, 2024.

Attest: Denise Hodsdon, CMC, City Clerk s/Maureen Copelof, Mayor

M-5. Amendment to Council Calendar – Mr. Hooper explained that the current calendar includes a special Ecusta Trail Strategic Planning Workshop for October 15th. However, Hurricane Helene has disrupted city operations for the last several weeks, preventing staff from dedicating as much time to planning the workshop as they had wished. Likewise, recovery efforts are likely to occupy much of the organization's attention for months to come. He asked Council to consider amending its calendar to either a.) indefinitely postpone the Ecusta Trail Workshop, or b.) reschedule the workshop to a future date. Ms. Holder moved, seconded by Mr. Morrow to indefinitely postpone the Ecusta Trail Workshop. The motion carried unanimously.

N. Remarks/Future Agenda Considerations.

Mr. Daniel commented that we are experiencing something pretty unique in our history and the history of our country as well with this storm. I commend our staff and all the other organizations that worked tirelessly to bring us through this and I am very thankful that we dodged the worst of it.

Mr. Morrow said I really appreciate the fact that the City actually stood up to communicate what was going on to everybody in the community. What you did on the website and emails was a stark difference to some of my friends in Asheville and Biltmore Forest where they have no idea what's going on. So I have shared your emails and connections to our website so they could see, as in this case my family own

property here in the city too. Thank you to staff, and I agree with Gary that knowing what's going around us, yes we are fortunate.

Ms. Holder said I ditto what has been said, and for the City and all that you've done, especially to have information delivered to us by car when we couldn't get on the internet. Your dedication has been above and beyond. The relief efforts continue, especially with regard to Asheville and I've had the opportunity to help there. If you know of anyone here or in Asheville who needs help or assistance, please let us know. People are calling us from all over the state and the country so we appreciate that. I want to thank my colleagues from SAFE, as I serve on that board and am very passionate about the ministry and what we do in the community. Thank you for being here tonight.

Mr. Wise said it's staggering how much has happened since we last met here publicly on September 16th. I am really appreciative to see you all here tonight and thank you for coming. I know this is maybe not the easiest meeting to be at right now, but we really appreciate it. I want to give a huge shoutout to everyone at the City. There are not words to really express the amount of effort you guys are going through and have gone through, and how much we appreciate it. I'm sure I speak for everyone in this room when I say that. There is still a lot to do. I was in Philadelphia for the past five days on a business trip and everyone I ran into commented with concern and asked how they could help, so certainly a lot of people have their eyes on us right now. I agree with Gary that while we dodged a bullet, a lot of people in our community and our region didn't, so let's keep our thoughts with them, and we continue the effort to help everyone. My mom was a 30-year breast cancer survivor, so I was very glad to see the proclamation. It means a lot to me.

Attorney McKeller said being able to see this staff up close in a crisis has been amazing and I want to say that everybody is on it. But the biggest thing that I've seen out of all the activity though is that what we really need to be looking forward to comes next. We've got businesses that aren't going to be able to have a normal fall season, which everyone knows is important here. We need to be looking at those kinds of activities next. Thankfully we are in a position to do that. Asheville can't even start thinking about that; they've still got to get water on. We never lost water, and we have come out of this truly blessed, but the hard part is going to be the next step. Survival is one thing; recovery is what's next and thankfully Brevard has a track record of doing that very well, so I look forward to seeing what we're going to do next.

Ms. Hodsdon said I am extremely proud to be a part of the team that brought this city through this historic event. I was not on the front line; I did not put in the hours that you all put in; you all amaze me and I am so proud of each and every one of you.

Mr. Hooper informed Council that at the next meeting he will have a further report on our response and our early thoughts on recovery efforts. He said as a manager of this staff, and more in particular, as a resident of Brevard, I am grateful to all of the city employees who were on duty during Helene. The spirit of public service was shining as bright as the sun in them, even when the skies were gray; and even in some cases while they were experiencing personal hardships of their own. I want to remind people that some of our employees had trees on their roofs, and no water or power, and they still came in to work to serve their community members. Staff and I have been talking about ways to recognize folks officially, so stay tuned for that, but in the meantime I just want to express publicly how grateful how I am to all those city employees that were involved. Finally, I want to share an anecdote, I know we'll have stories to tell in the months to come, but I want to share this one. Even during the darkest time when things were most stressful, one of the things that helped me get through it was that just about everywhere I went, there were kids around. Public servants who were working but who didn't have water or power at their own home, brought their kids in. It was joyous to see them around playing board games, doing arts and crafts or watching videos on old VHS tape. That's the story that I'm going to carry with me in my memory of the storm and I want to thank all those youngsters who were around and chatted with me and gave me a few moments of levity and peace in the

middle of this stressful situation. Thanks to city employees; thanks to county employees; and thanks to their kids.

Mayor Copelof said I can only reecho what everyone has already said. Our world changed that day and I could not be prouder of the staff of this city. They truly worked until they were exhausted and then they kept working. They kept all 8000 people in the city safe and we came through this crisis. We came through it with some damage, with sorrow, and with some degree of trauma, but we have come through it, and we are on the road to recovery. As our City Attorney said we have now passed the survival stage, and we are looking at the rebuilding stage. We are working to make sure that everybody who has been displaced by the storm who is not able to be living in their home because it was damaged or destroyed, first we have gotten them in an emergency shelter, but now we are trying to work to get them into temporary housing probably for 6-8 months until their homes are repaired. I am very proud of the efforts that have been going on. We are going to be working with the Housing Assistance Corporation in trying to match properties that are available for temporary housing to families that have a need for that housing here in Transylvania County. We are working family by family to take care of our neighbors. We are also looking at what do we do about our businesses. Some businesses got actual physical damage, but the real damage is that this is the top month for our businesses to make money and stay in business, and store owners are worried about the survival of their business. That is critical for jobs and our community. Heart of Brevard, the Chamber, TDA, and TEA have relaunched Transylvania Tomorrow, the fund we had during Covid to help our small businesses. We have been through a trauma, so we are making sure that we are putting in place psychological support and counseling services. Our faith community, our non-profits, and our county response team working in conjunction with our city staff have all been absolutely amazing. I also want to point out how hard our City Manager worked in coordinating that effort. Yes, we had wonderful teams out there, but he was directing those teams, and I know it was a very long night. Thank you for everything that you did and the leadership that you gave to this city during this crisis. She announced that on October 21st at 4:00 pm at MCJCC we will be holding another Community Conversation session about how do we pull everything together to make our community whole again. She noted that one of the most frequently asked questions over the last few days is "what do we do with all of the storm-damaged stuff in our house; can we put it out on the curb for the city to pick up?" She informed everyone that Public Works crews have been collecting storm damaged items and storm debris left at the curb and they will continue to do so with no additional fees through October 18th. After that date people can request a waiver until November 1st.

O. Closed Session – None.

P. Adjourn – There being no further business, at 6:46 p.m. Mr. Wise moved, seconded by Mr. Morrow, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Maureen Copelof	Denise Hodsdon, CMC
Mayor	City Clerk

Minutes Approved: October 21, 2024