

CITY OF EDEN, N.C.

The regular meeting of the City Council, City of Eden, was held on Tuesday, November 16, 2021 at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 308 E. Stadium Drive. Those present for the meeting were as follows:

Mayor:	Neville Hall
Council Members:	Darryl Carter
	Gerald Ellis (attended remotely)
	Jerry Epps
	Angela Hampton
	Phillip Hunnicutt (attended remotely)
	Bernie Moore
	Bruce Nooe
City Manager:	Jon Mendenhall
City Clerk:	Deanna Hunt
City Attorney:	Erin Gilley
News Media:	Roy Sawyers, Rockingham Update
	Mike Moore, Mike Moore Media

MEETING CONVENED:

Mayor Hall called the regular meeting of the Eden City Council to order and welcomed those in attendance. Pastor Luke Money from Pleasant View Baptist Church gave an invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Fire Chief Todd Harden.

PROCLAMATIONS AND RECOGNITIONS:

- a. Recognition: Prowlers 8U Division 1 Champions

Mayor Hall called on Parks and Recreation Director Terry Vernon and Prowlers Coordinator Earl Fountain. He invited the members of the 8U Prowlers football team to come forward.

Mayor Hall stated that the Prowlers football organization had partnered with the City in order to consolidate into one football program. Prowlers had been a very successful organization for a long time and was now being directed by Mr. Fountain.

Mr. Fountain said it was a pleasure to attend the meeting. The program and leadership were put together from scratch with the help of Prowlers Coach Ben Curtis and Mr. Vernon. While it was rough at times, the team had fought hard all year long. The season began with small kids and a lack of teams to play but they fought the entire year. Mr. Fountain felt good about the football program in Eden and its progression and felt it was going in the right direction. He handed the championship trophy to Mr. Vernon stating that it would not have been possible without him.

Mr. Vernon said he watched the team play the entire year. They lost their first game to Northwest Guilford but won the playoffs against Northwest Guilford. One of the games played in Virginia was close until the very end; it was tied 0-0 with a minute and a half left in the game and the Prowlers received a safety on the defensive end and won the game 2-0. While the players might appear to be small, they were tough. He said the team had done a great job improving with the help of Coach Curtis and his staff. He looked forward to next year.

Mayor Hall acknowledged and thanked the parents of the players, stating they were the reason the kids made it to practice.

SET MEETING AGENDA:

A motion was made by Council Member Epps to set the meeting agenda. Council Member Carter seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried, 7-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

There were none at this time.

REQUESTS AND PETITIONS OF CITIZENS:

There were none at this time.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was none at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Consideration to adopt a memorandum of understanding with Rockingham County Schools regarding the use, disposition, and future of Draper Elementary School.

Mayor Hall called on City Attorney Erin Gilley.

Ms. Gilley said staff prepared a memorandum of understanding that would initiate a framework for a partnership between the City and Rockingham County Schools regarding the former Draper Elementary School campus. While details of the ownership, use of the building, and use of the campus had not yet been determined, the parties intended to work together in good faith to explore opportunities. The agreement did not bind the City or school system to any particular action but would give staff of both boards the authorization and framework to develop a plan to be brought before Council and the school board for final action. The memorandum gave the parties until February 1, 2022 to develop a plan. City staff recommended that Council approve the memorandum of understanding in order to allow the two entities and their staff the ability to proceed with the project.

Council Member Hampton asked if Ms. Gilley was referring to the City and schools' planning staff that would be working on the project.

Ms. Gilley said yes and added that it would include the city manager, herself for legal purposes, and anyone else who was needed.

Mayor Hall said it was an agreement to work together to determine the best solution for the property.

A motion was made by Council Member Hampton to adopt a memorandum of understanding with Rockingham County Schools regarding the use, disposition, and future of Draper Elementary School. Council Member Moore seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried, 7-0.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CITY OF EDEN
AND ROCKINGHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS
TO PARTNER ON DRAPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FUTURE VISIONING

This Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter "MOU") is made and entered into this ___ day of _____, 2021 by and between the City of Eden, a municipal corporation of the State of North Carolina

(hereinafter “City”), and Rockingham County Schools, a North Carolina local education agency (hereinafter “Schools”) (City and Schools sometimes referred to herein as the “Parties”).

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, the City and Schools continue to support the significant and various benefits that will result from partnering together to develop a proactive, community-based vision for the Draper School (“Campus”);

WHEREAS, the City and Schools continue to work together in an effective partnership that benefits the residents of the Eden area region (“Region”) by focusing on providing equal opportunity and access to important educational, civic, community, and cultural services and events;

WHEREAS, the Parties intend for this MOU to further their effective partnership and result in their joint commitment to integrate certain services and develop a shared vision for the future use of the Campus.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the recitals set forth above, the Parties hereby agree to enter into this MOU to set forth the intentions, values, and undertakings they have agreed to in exploring the provision of integrated services and developing a shared vision for the Campus.

1. INTENT OF MOU. The Parties agree that the primary principles and objectives of this MOU are as follows:

- a. Partnering together on developing a shared vision for the Campus including, but not being limited to, entering into possible agreements for various real property transactions between the Parties relative to the Campus;
- b. Improving the delivery of services focusing on the various needs of the Region’s residents;
- c. Achieving a vision of greater economic value and financial returns on investments for the Region’s taxpayers;
- d. Increasing and improving the Parties’ operational efficiencies whenever and wherever possible; and
- e. Establishing better services meeting a variety of needs in targeted areas such as, *e.g.*, providing resources for: retirees and seniors; pre-kindergarten children; expanded community and civic engagement; adult learners and workforce training; and a regional events space.

2. MOU VALUES. The Parties will continue to utilize the following shared values when evaluating, developing, and implementing a future vision for the Campus and exploring the provision of integrated public services:

- a. Innovation - seeking innovative and imaginative solutions to improve service delivery on a sustainable basis and reducing the costs thereof;
- b. Challenge – each party shall be open to being challenged by the other;
- c. Best Fit - adopting a “best fit” approach to service-related solutions;
- d. Partnership - developing a positive and effective partnership, by and through the Parties’ respective governing boards, to assist each other in developing service-related opportunities and achievable solutions through third-party providers;
- e. Accountability – achieving accountability through delivery of agreed outcomes; and
- f. Transparency - making open and clear decisions and publicly demonstrating service level improvements and corresponding financial benefits.

3. UNDERTAKINGS OF THE PARTIES.

- a. The Parties shall work together in good faith to explore opportunities conforming to the intentions and values set forth in Sections 1 and 2 above. Any such opportunities shall preserve the rights, obligations, and duties of the Schools to complete the current academic year unhindered and unaltered, including non-academic use of the Campus, until a sufficient contractual relationship providing for the same is developed by agreement between the parties;
- b. The Parties shall continue to explore and evaluate, under their previously established framework, effective and efficient partnering opportunities, and shall develop and present actionable steps to their respective governing boards for integrating shared services and developing a future vision for the Campus.

4. TERM OF MOU. By operation of this paragraph, this MOU shall expire on February 1, 2022 unless extended by a writing signed by the Parties' authorized representatives.

5. NON-BINDING AND NON-ASSIGNABLE. The Parties agree that this MOU is non-binding and non-assignable.

6. INDEPENDENCE OF THE PARTIES. The Parties each acknowledge that they are separate and independent entities and that this MOU shall not be interpreted or construed as creating or evidencing any association, joint venture, partnership, or franchise relationship among the Parties or imposing any obligation or liability on each other arising out of any such status.

7. COSTS. Each Party is responsible for its own costs, including wages, salaries, and incurred expenses, while performing under this MOU.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties' duly authorized representatives have caused this Memorandum of Understanding to be executed in the County of Rockingham, North Carolina this the ___ day of _____, 2021.

CITY OF EDEN

BY: Neville Hall, Mayor

ROCKINGHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS

BY: Kimberly McMichael, Chairperson

- b. Consideration of a continuous improvement proposal involving Police Department camera technology.

Mayor Hall called on Police Chief Clint Simpson.

Chief Simpson said a summary regarding body cameras, in-car cameras, and tasers was included in the agenda packet and provided to Council. Initially, the Police Department began working on the camera replacement project for FY 2022-23. During the research process, it was discovered the upgrade was eligible to be purchased by utilizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. The department had been struggling with body cameras purchased from Safe Fleet, formerly L3, over the last few years. In 2011, in-car cameras were installed in each patrol vehicle. In 2016, the department incorporated body cameras via L3 because the software was compatible. Both the in-car and body cameras operated on a server-based system that would no longer receive support or updates after January 1, 2022 when they would be considered to have reached the end of their life. Customer service had become almost non-existent and the product had declined to the point where the cameras were being continuously sent off for repair. During the time the department had used body cameras, it had gone through three different variations of the cameras. Eighteen, which was half, of the department's cameras had been sent off for repair with an

approximate one-week delay in approval for return and two-week delay for the repair work. All of the cameras sent for repair had been deemed irreparable by the company, leaving the department forced to purchase a new camera at a cost of \$500 each. The department currently had nine cameras out of use. The package with Axon Enterprises would incorporate, streamline, and make more efficient three different processes within the department: tasers, body-worn cameras, and in-car camera systems. It would also provide the department with state-of-the-art technology in those three areas. The department had 10 tasers budgeted for replacement as part of the current fiscal year's replacement plan. However, the department delayed the replacement purchase until the outcome of the proposed package was determined. The cost of the proposed package would be \$119,000 per year for the next five years, which included the state-of-the-art software technology. Chief Simpson added that it was evident in today's time how important body camera and in-car camera footage was for transparency. Police administration devoted eight to 10 hours per week on rotations and repairs of the current body camera system. The proposed package would provide efficiency within the department through the enhanced technology provided. Currently, the department contracted with Safe Fleet but purchased its tasers directly from Taser. The proposed package would combine the two aspects, resulting in zero cost for replacement, lost, or damaged cameras over the next six years for both in-car and body cameras, as well as tasers. Therefore, there were some benefits with the proposed package in spite of the cost. The state-of-the-art technology also helped to eliminate human error. For example, anytime an officer were to draw his/her taser or weapon, any Axon camera within 50 feet would automatically be activated versus the officer having to manually activate his/her camera, if there were even time to do so. Currently, the Rockingham County Sheriff's Department used Axon cameras; therefore, anytime they were to assist an Eden officer, their cameras would be automatically activated as well. Chief Simpson asked for Council's consideration in moving forward with the proposed package in an effort to help provide the department with state-of-the-art camera technology.

Council Member Carter asked Chief Simpson what the price of the package was.

Chief Simpson said the cost was broken down over five years under contracted services for an annual cost of \$119,606.32 and a total package cost of \$589,030. Initially, the company would replace each of the department's body cameras and tasers. At year three, the company would replace every camera and taser and take back what was used for the first two and a half to three years. At year five, everything would be updated, including firmware and bodycams, which would get the department to year seven or eight before needing to renegotiate a contract.

Council Member Hampton asked if Chief Simpson was satisfied with the turnaround time with the new company if one were to need to be repaired.

Chief Simpson said Axon Enterprises would automatically supply the department with one reserve bodycam, taser, and in-car camera system. The technology was not just in the products they used but in the software as well. Currently, the department had to separately purchase taser cartridges but the cartridges would be included with Axon Enterprises. Because the tasers were automatically linked to www.evidence.com, which was Axon's proprietary software, a new cartridge would automatically be shipped to the department if an officer were to deploy his/her taser. It would eliminate the need for staff to call and order a replacement cartridge. Throughout the research process, the department had found the customer service to be tremendous and he was confident that the requested technology was the premier, top of the line system that any law enforcement agency could obtain. A lot of law enforcement agencies were striving to reach the same level.

Council Member Moore stated that the other agencies in New York, Concord, Greensboro, and Reidsville that the department had contacted gave the company good reviews; therefore, they must be happy with them as well.

Chief Simpson said that everyone Captain Paul Moore had spoken to was satisfied with the company. The proposed request was just the tip of the iceberg of what the system’s capabilities were. It also provided automatic tag readers that could be placed on vehicles that linked to the in-car cameras, the capability to watch live vehicle stops, etc. There were several package options that could be added but those were things he did not feel were needed at the present time. However, that was not to say that in the future he would not feel they were needed, but if that happened, the capabilities would be there.

Mayor Hall said the body cameras were a great piece of protection for the citizens, as well as the officers. They would both benefit by having video recordings.

Council Member Moore made a motion to approve a continuous improvement proposal involving Police Department camera technology. Council Member Hampton seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried, 7-0.

CITY OF EDEN – MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
THRU: JON MENDENHALL, CITY MANAGER
FROM: ERIN GILLEY, CITY ATTORNEY
DATE: NOVEMBER 16, 2021
SUBJECT: Axon Enterprises (In Car Camera & Body Worn Camera Replacement) Purchase

City staff is requesting the authorization to purchase a package that includes Body Worn Cameras, Tasers, and a technology package from Axon Enterprise, Inc. Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 129 (e) (6), the City is authorized to make this purchase because the vendor is the sole source provider of the product package and standardization and/or compatibility is an overriding consideration in the purchase.

Attached to this memo, you will find documentation that Axon Enterprise, Inc. is the sole provider for the product package Axon Core+ including TASER 7 energy weapon, TASER Dock, weapon Axon Evidence license, training and duty cartridges, Axon Body 3 camera, Professional Axon Evidence license, unlimited storage, camera hardware upgrade, Axon Respond, Axon Signal Sidearm, Axon Fleet Signal and auto tagging.

In addition, this package offers a single software platform to simultaneously operate multiple devices and provide unlimited cloud storage. This operation will create standardization among the devices and storage capabilities that will provide operational efficiency. These facts support the conclusion that standardization and compatibility is an overriding consideration in the purchase.

Staff is recommending this purchase. Please contact me if you should have any questions or concerns.

- c. Consideration of Workplace & Employer Coronavirus Adjustments for Retention of Employees and an amended ARPA plan of reinvestment.

Mayor Hall called on Director of Finance and Personnel Tammie McMichael.

Ms. McMichael said City Manager Jon Mendenhall had been working very closely with Assistant City Manager/Police Chief Simpson, the Finance Department, and Ms. Gilley in efforts to establish a plan that would recognize the contributing service of employees to the health, safety, and welfare of the residents that the City served. The City was extremely blessed to have dedicated employees who loved Eden. They served the public 110 percent before the COVID-19 pandemic and had continued to do so. The fact that City employees continued to show up for work spoke volumes. She was certain each member of Council had recognized the help wanted, now hiring, and sign-on bonus signs throughout the community. Local governments were not protected from the situation. She had heard from fellow colleagues throughout the state who were having great concerns about losing employees to other employers, as well as retirement,

and not being able to find and hire replacements. City management was concerned about the employment issues and acknowledged that each employee was living in a very difficult time as a result of COVID-19 and the rising cost of living. It was very important to recognize the contributing service of the City's employees. She said to remember that without the dedicated and essential employees, there would be a lack of police and fire safety, a lack of providing clean drinking water, a lack of wastewater processing, a lack of sewer and water line maintenance and repair, a lack of street maintenance and repair, and a lack of recreational opportunities for the great citizens of Eden. Staff proposed employee recognition to address three categories; compensation, health insurance, and workplace climate. Ms. McMichael asked Mr. Mendenhall to share his comments.

Mr. Mendenhall said he wanted to reiterate Ms. McMichael's thoughts on the issue. She had been very eloquent in her introduction of the item. There were four Rs that the item addressed: recognition of employees and their service, relief of employees during the time of high and rapid inflation, retention of the good and long-serving employees, and the recruitment of quality new employees where openings occurred. Under the compensation category, prospective premium and retrospective premium pay were addressed. The prospective premium proposed paying a seven percent cost of living adjustment (COLA), which was the addition of Social Security, which had paid 5.9 percent on October 13 and 1.3 percent in October 2020. At the time of the budget retreat earlier in the year, the City estimated enough funds would be available to pay one percent COLA. At the present time, staff did not feel that was sufficient and wanted to consider a seven percent prospective pay premium moving forward. In regards to retrospective premium pay, City administration proposed a one-time \$1,000 pay per full-time employee and a one-time \$500 pay per part-time employee for employees employed on July 1. It would be paid in a lump sum effective the first payroll in December. He asked if there were any questions related to the compensation category.

Council Member Nooe asked what the projected cost was.

Mr. Mendenhall said the prospective premium pay annualized cost would be \$698,389.20. The retrospective premium pay would be \$186,500. Those were annual costs.

Council Member Nooe asked how the raises would be funded.

Mr. Mendenhall replied that the funding would be paid for out of ARPA relief funds, which were the monies received for COVID relief. Staff conducted extensive research to make sure the City could carry the cost moving forward. It appeared that in 2025 the City would be able to sustain the annual cost, even in a conservative environment.

Mr. Mendenhall said the second category addressed health insurance. There were several different proposals comprised into five subcategories. The first addressed offering free tele-doctor primary and specialty care to all health insurance plan eligible employees and their dependents. The City would utilize Teladoc's Healthiest-You integrated health care system, which would provide access to general medicine, dermatology, neck/back, nutrition, mental health, and second opinions at no cost to employees. Many employers had nurses on staff. The City would essentially have a doctor on staff who would be a phone call away for employees and their dependents. The idea was to divert unnecessary emergency room and medical clinic visits. It would also eliminate a co-pay, which would benefit those who were on the margin of not being able to afford paying a co-pay for a visit; it would provide employees and their dependents access to free medical care, enabling them to be the healthiest they could possibly be in order to be the best they could be. Secondly, a highly encouraged health management program would be provided for persons with underlying health conditions. Throughout the pandemic, a lot was heard and discussed regarding underlying health conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, prediabetes, etc. As an insurance provider and employer, the City wanted to provide management options for employees who suffered from such chronic conditions. Management would highly encourage enrollment in the programs to better

manage health conditions and bring them under control. It appeared that once a person began suffering from one chronic condition, they would soon begin to suffer from others. By attacking chronic conditions early on, it would help the employees better manage their lives and chronic conditions. The third sub-category addressed a prescription drug management plan that would be an orphan drug program. There were many orphan drugs available that were no longer popular and were rarely prescribed. However, when they were prescribed, they were expensive. The thought would be to manage the prescription for the orphan drugs in an effort to discourage prescribing a full prescription when only a few pills may be used. By filling half or quarter prescriptions, it would eliminate people throwing away an expensive amount of prescription medication because it was possibly not effectual. In addition, an opioid risk management program would be implemented to manage opioids prescribed to employees. While those drugs could be important for pain management and treatment, the City would want to ensure the opioids were being managed in a beneficial way for all employees. The fourth sub-category was healthcare for retirees in recognition of the incidences impacting those bearing the brunt of COVID-19 negative health consequences in older age after retirement from the City. Administration would like to extend health insurance back to retirees to let them know that regardless of what health conditions they faced, they had an extension of healthcare benefits moving forward. The fifth item was the alignment of the City's self-funded health plan with Title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act. There were some mental health aspects that the federal government required that the City already provided, but they required more paperwork. The City could opt out of those aspects in order to save paperwork, cost, and compliance because they were already offered.

Council Member Epps asked if Mr. Mendenhall had discussed the health insurance proposal with an insurance representative.

Mr. Mendenhall said the City had been working with a broker for some time and as a result, management was attempting to take their recommendations in order to better manage the employees that received insurance. Through better management, the City could control cost and realize a healthier work force.

Council Member Epps asked if the prices were going to be locked in from one year to the next.

Mr. Mendenhall replied yes because they would be under contract.

Council Member Nooe asked how many years of service an employee had to have before he/she could retire as a City employee.

Mr. Mendenhall said the proposed provisions were voided in 2018. Administration was proposing to go back to the 2018 timeframe and reinstate the voided provisions such as they were in 2018. With 25 to 30 years of service, a person had to retire through the North Carolina Local Government Retirement System and would receive a 75 percent City-paid benefit or \$412.50 per month, whichever was less. The remaining 25 percent would come from the employee. If a person retired with 30 years of service, the City would cover 100 percent with zero coming from the employee.

Mayor Hall asked if the provision would apply only to new hires.

Mr. Mendenhall said it would go back to 2018, removing the barrier put in place at that time between those retired with insurance and those retired without insurance since their risks were the same during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mayor Hall said he remembered that the provisions were put in place in 2018 because the City would not be able to afford insurance for all employees for the rest of their lives in the long run. Everyone who was hired up until the day before did have that benefit. However, it would take the City 30 years to have

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employees not dependent on health insurance for anyone hired after the fact. As much as Council would like to have provided health insurance for all employees for the remainder of their lives, they realized it was a cost burden that could not be done. He had concern about going back on that decision as it was a well thought out process and a lot of decisions were made to make that determination as painless as possible for employees. He was not personally aware of any applicants who decided not to work for the City as a result of that decision. He felt it was fair for the City to not provide insurance to new employees after they retired if they were told so when they were hired. The newly hired employees would have 25 or 30 years to figure out what to do about insurance after retirement.

Council Member Hunnicutt agreed with Mayor Hall. He recalled there was a lot of research and work that went into the policy change in 2018. Rather than Council rescind something that had been well-vetted, he would rather pull that part of the provision out, noting it could always be considered at a later time if it were to become an issue for the City in its inability to recruit or hire. All would be open to reviewing something like that. The change in 2018 was made for a reason that needed to be considered.

Mayor Hall said it would not change the insurance for anyone, but rather, it would leave it as it was without adding back to it the people who did not qualify beforehand. He asked Mr. Mendenhall if that was correct.

Mr. Mendenhall said yes.

Council Member Carter asked if the City's insurance coverage for retirees still expired at the age of 65.

Mr. Mendenhall said a retiree would come off of the City's insurance when he/she went on Medicare.

Ms. Gilley said a resolution was included that detailed each item Council would be approving and one of those items included an ordinance change. She asked Council to direct staff how to handle the retiree insurance provision when they made a motion. The resolution could be changed to reflect how Council wanted the item to be handled. There was also another provision regarding the insurance. When the changes were made in 2018, there was a provision for a retirement tier at 20 years of service in what was currently allowed. In addition, the 25 to 30 years of service provision was inadvertently left out of the ordinance; therefore, she requested Council place that provision back in the ordinance. She asked for Council to instruct her on how they wanted to proceed with adding it back in and she would help with wording the motion.

Council Member Epps asked if the City should have a disclaimer so when someone new was hired, they would know about the lack of insurance coverage after retirement.

Mr. Mendenhall said the City did. The new employees knew coming in that health insurance was not provided after retirement.

Council Member Carter asked what other municipalities and the county offered.

Mr. Mendenhall said that Rockingham County did not offer health insurance after retirement. They did a similar thing in 2018 as the City. The City of Reidsville did offer health insurance after retirement.

Mayor Hall said the City of Reidsville had a different tax rate than Eden.

Mr. Mendenhall said workplace climate was the last category. City administration proposed that a living wage be paid to all employees either full-time or part-time; accordingly, the pay plan would be adjusted to reflect such. The federal poverty level was \$24,300 while the City's lowest pay grade started at \$23,597. It was not an anti-poverty level campaign, but rather the belief that an honest day's work deserved an honest day's pay. Also, in order to attract qualified workers, the City needed to pay an honest day's rate

of pay. It also affected part-time daytime firefighters and part-time seasonal laborers. The City currently paid between \$9 and \$10 an hour while some firefighters made upwards of \$12, which was insufficient given some of the part-time advertisements for work seen around town. The pay needed to be increased in order to be more competitive. The estimated living wage for Rockingham County was \$13.08 per hour or \$27,206.40. City administration proposed that the starting wage be no less than \$12.62 per hour. With standard probationary increases after successful completion of the mandatory probationary period, the effective living wage would be \$13.25 per hour. Commensurate with such, the state's budget that was recently passed moved all the part-time and classified workers under the state's budget to \$13 per hour, with the intention to increase them to \$15 per hour in two years. Therefore, the state minimum wage for all state-funded positions would be \$15 per hour, which was something that might have to be revisited in the future by the City. In addition and at no cost to the City, administration proposed that all employees be given the option to enroll, at the cost of the employee, in a 457 deferred compensation plan offered through the state treasurer's office. The City would not match or contribute to the plan; however, employees would have the option to make additional contributions to their retirement. Lastly, administration proposed to renovate the employee workout space at City Hall by adding air conditioning, better lighting, and modernization to encourage exercise as part of employee health and wellness. While it was frequently used, especially in the afternoon by public works employees, management would like to see it used even more.

Council Member Nooe asked if the type of healthcare offered by the City allowed health savings accounts.

Mr. Mendenhall said staff had discussed health savings accounts with the broker but did not get far in the conversation due to the complexity and money that was often given back to the employer rather than the employee taking advantage of it. It could be revisited again. It was discussed as an effort to help employees manage their healthcare and retirement healthcare while also managing their tax burden. The conversation about it got very complex quick.

Mayor Hall said he felt a motion could be made on the entire agenda item with revisions to any part. He asked Ms. Gilley for assistance with the wording of the motion due to the change in the presented memorandum.

Ms. Gilley said she thought the issue that may be changed was the proposal of insurance for retirees.

Mayor Hall said it was for new employees hired after the changes were made in 2018, not current employees.

Ms. Gilley agreed.

Council Member Nooe made a motion to approve the Workplace and Employer Coronavirus Adjustments for Retention of Employees and an amended ARPA plan of reinvestment with the exclusion of the proposed changes to retiree health insurance in order to allow the Council and Mr. Mendenhall to discuss projected costs over the coming years. Council Member Nooe added to the motion the modification of the ordinance to include the previously omitted retirement schedule for those hired before the changes made in 2018 and retiring with 25 to 30 years of service. Council Member Hampton seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried, 7-0.

Council Member Carter said the people that worked throughout the pandemic certainly deserved the raise, especially those on the front lines. It was a well thought out process in an effort to retain City employees. The employees were the backbone of the City and without them, the City had nothing. He felt the citizens would also approve it and as a former Fire Department employee, he approved it.

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EDEN WORKPLACE & EMPLOYER
CORONAVIRUS ADJUSTMENTS

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes that the citizens of Eden have been reliant on the City employees during the COVID-19 pandemic to serve the public with essential services, and that City employees are continuing to contribute to the health, safety and welfare of the public in their daily work, dealing with disruptions in supply chains and labor markets; and

WHEREAS, The City Council desires to provide recognition for this public service effort by addressing the compensation, health insurance and workplace climate of its employees; and

WHEREAS, THE city Manager Has prepared a Memorandum entitled Workplace & Employer Coronavirus Adjustments for Retention of Employees, attached and incorporated hereto; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to utilize a combination of general fund revenue and government provided relief funds, including Recovery Funds of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP/CLFRF) where applicable and subject to all its legal requirements to fund these expenditures; and

WHEREAS, the City of Eden desires to comply with all federal and state legal requirements including those of the NC Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act and ARP/CLFRF and desires to amend the FY 2021-2022 Budget as required to accomplish this; and

WHEREAS, City Council desires to authorize the appropriate City Staff to execute the intentions of this Resolution; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council for the City of Eden as follows:

1. Based upon the requirements of ARP/CLFRF, the City Manager shall adopt a written policy that implements a Premium Pay Program that complies with all ARP/CLFRF re including the federal Uniform Guidance (UG), 2C.F.R.200;
2. According to his attached memo and in his discretion, The City Manager shall adopt a revised pay classification plan that implements a 7% prospective pay premium to be paid pro-rata each pay period and a retrospective pay in the amount of \$1,000 for full time employees and \$500 for part time employees. The 1% COLA that was set to go into effect in January 2022 will be rolled into and a become a part of the 7% prospective pay premium. The pay plan shall also be revised to reflect a living wage, with the starting wage for either full time or part time employees be no less than \$12.62, increasing to \$12.25 per hour after successfully completed probationary periods. These shall be effective December 2021.
3. Staff will prepare a Budget amendment for Council’s action, reflecting the appropriate amount of ARPA/CLFRF grant funds being transferred from the project ordinance to the appropriate General Fund and Water and Sewer Fund appropriations.
4. Staff will prepare a Budget amendment for Council’s action, reflecting the appropriate amount of fund balance funds being transferred to the appropriate General Fund and Water and Sewer Fund appropriations.
5. Staff will prepare changes to the health insurance plan at set forth in the attached memo prepared by the City Manager.
6. Staff will prepare an Ordinance amendment to Chapter 10- 6.3 (B) (3), correcting an inadvertent error in a 2018 amendment, adding the following groups:

<u>Years of Service</u>		<u>Individual Premiums</u>	
<u>At least</u>	<u>No more than</u>	<u>City pays</u>	<u>Employee pays</u>

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25 years	30 years	75% or up to a maximum of \$412.50 per month, whichever is less	25% or the remaining cost, whichever is more
30 years		100% or up to a maximum of \$550 per month, whichever is less	0% or the remaining cost, whichever is more

This language and those groups were inadvertently left out of the ordinance amendment enacted in 2018. This correction will continue City provision of insurance to these groups as it has been since 2001.

APPROVED, ADOPTED AND EFFECTIVE this 16th day of November, 2021.

CITY OF EDEN

BY: Neville Hall, Mayor

ATTEST: Deanna Hunt, City Clerk

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING
THE CITY CODE
OF THE CITY OF EDEN

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL of the City of Eden, North Carolina, that § 10-6.3 of the Eden City Code is amended to read as follows:

Eden - Personnel

§ 10-6.3 RETIREE LIFE, HEALTH AND DENTAL INSURANCE.

(A) *Life Insurance.* At its sole expense, the city will provide group life insurance for its retired employees' with an established death benefit.

(B) *Health And Dental Insurance.*

(1) An employee retiring on or before November 20, 2001, may, by paying 100% of the premium for the coverage, participate in the city's group health and hospitalization program so long as the city's contracts with its insurers permits such participation.

(2) An employee retiring on or after November 21, 2001 but before August 29, 2009 must retire under the North Carolina Local Government Retirement System and draw or currently be eligible to draw benefits from the system in order to qualify for payment of all or part of the health care and dental care insurance premium. Retirement system regulations on eligibility for retirement govern eligibility for the program. The city will pay the premium for the coverage based on the policies established by the Council, subject to change. The following schedule will be in effect until changed for employees retiring within the dates of this subsection:

<u>Years of Service</u>		<u>Individual Premiums</u>	
<u>At least</u>	<u>No more than</u>	<u>City pays</u>	<u>Employee pays</u>
25 years	30 years	75% or up to a maximum of \$412.50 per month, whichever is less	25% or the remaining cost, whichever is more
30 years		100% or up to a maximum of \$550 per month, whichever is less	0% or the remaining cost, whichever is more

(3) An employee hired on or before April 17, 2018 and retiring on or after August 29, 2009 must retire under the North Carolina Local Government Retirement System and draw or currently be eligible to draw benefits from the system in order to qualify for payment of all or part of the health care and dental care insurance premium. Retirement system regulations on eligibility for retirement govern eligibility for the program. The city will pay the premium for the coverage based on the policies established by the Council, subject to change. The following schedule will be in effect until changed:

<u>Years of Service</u>		<u>Individual Premiums</u>	
<u>At least</u>	<u>No more than</u>	<u>City pays</u>	<u>Employee pays</u>
20 years	25 years	50% or up to a maximum of \$275 per month, whichever is less	50% or the remaining cost, whichever is more
25 years	30 years	75% or up to a maximum of \$412.50 per month, whichever is less	25% or the remaining cost, whichever is more
30 years		100% or up to a maximum of \$550 per month, whichever is less	0% or the remaining cost, whichever is more

(4) Any employee hired after April 17, 2018 shall not qualify for payment of all or part of the health care and dental care insurance premium upon retirement and shall not qualify for participation in the City's health and dental insurance policy.

(5) A minimum of 50% of an employees years of service (10.0 years, 12.5 years or 15 years respectively) with the city shall be required in order to receive this benefit. The other 50% of an employees years of service (10.0 years, 12.5 years or 15 years respectively) must be with an agency/organization which is a member of a Statewide Local Government Employee's Retirement System or a Statewide Teacher's and Statewide Employee's Retirement System or other systems under a Department of State Treasurer or a self-funded Local Government Retirement System. Any sick leave converted for time at the end of service for retirement purposes shall count in the computation of time served with the city.

(a) Such employees may elect to purchase health care and/or dental insurance coverage for their eligible dependents and shall pay the full cost of this dependent coverage. Dependent coverage must be in place at least 12 months prior to an employee's retirement date.

(b) Payment of premiums for dependents must be paid in accordance with schedules and procedures established for the city's benefit by the City Manager or designee for the group health and dental plan. Failure to pay the required premium will result in loss of coverage, once coverage has been discontinued, it cannot be reinstated without the written approval of the City Manager.

(c) The city's payment of premiums for group health and dental coverage for retirees will be discontinued when:

1. The retiree begins to draw social security benefits and becomes eligible for Medicare; or
2. The retiree becomes eligible for 100% of social security benefits; whichever event occurs first between items 1 and 2; or
3. The retiree becomes eligible for social security disability.

Minutes of the November 16, 2021 meeting of the City Council, City of Eden:

Any employee not meeting the aforementioned criteria by paying 100% of the premium for coverage will be allowed to remain on the city's insurance policy for 18 months from the date of separation from the organization.

(Ord. passed 5-17-94; Am. Ord. passed 11-20-01; Am. Ord. passed 1-17-02; Am. Ord. passed 6-20-06; Am. Ord. passed 8-29-09; Am. Ord. passed 1-21-14; Am. Ord. passed 2-18-14; Am. Ord. passed 4-17-18; Am. Ord. passed 5-15-18; Am. Ord. passed 6-19-18)

APPROVED, ADOPTED AND EFECTIVE, this 16 day of November, 2021.

CITY OF EDEN

BY: Neville Hall, Mayor

ATTEST: Deanna Hunt, City Clerk

- d. Consideration and adoption of a resolution of intent to close an alley on the east side of Bridge Street.

Mayor Hall called on Director of Planning and Community Development Kelly Stultz.

Ms. Stultz said there was an unopened alleyway located at 636 Boone Road. Staff received a request from the adjoining owners of Scotty's Carpet and Oriental Rug and the vacant lot beside it to close the alleyway. The memo, staff report, resolution of intent to close the alley, and a map were included for Council in the agenda packet. Staff asked Council to adopt the resolution and request a public hearing for the December City Council meeting.

Mayor Hall said it was obvious the alley had not been in use, nor was it currently in use.

Council Member Nooe added that the applicants owned the property surrounding the alley.

Mayor Hall agreed and said that was a good point.

Council Member Ellis made a motion to adopt a resolution of intent to close an alley on the east side of Bridge Street. Council Member Moore seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried, 7-0.

RESOLUTION OF INTENT
TO CLOSE AN ALLEY ON THE EAST SIDE OF BRIDGE STREET

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Eden, North Carolina, that:

Pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 13, Article III, Division 3 and Section 13-88 of the Eden City Code and Section 160A-299 of the North Carolina General Statutes, the City Council of the City of Eden, North Carolina, does hereby declare its intention to close the following alley:

Being all of that alley located on the east side of Bridge Street at its intersection with Boone Road and Washington Street referenced in Deed Book 1959, page 1961 and Deed Book 661, page 729, a copy of a survey showing a portion of the alley being recorded with the Deed in Book 661, page 729. This alley is surrounded on three sides by the property described in Deed Book 1959, page 1961, Tax PIN 7979-07-68-2808, Parcel Number 173480Z1 and as shown on the attached GIS map which is attached hereto for reference.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council does hereby call for a public hearing on the said closing to be held on the 21st day of December, 2021, at 6:00 P.M.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution will be published once a week for four successive weeks prior to said hearing, a copy of said Resolution be sent registered mail or certified mail to all owners of property adjoining

Minutes of the November 16, 2021 meeting of the City Council, City of Eden:

said street as shown on the Rockingham County Tax Records, and prominently posted in at least two places along said street.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Board is hereby requested to submit its recommendation on the proposed closing of said street for consideration of the City Council at the time of said public hearing.

APPROVED, ADOPTED AND EFFECTIVE, this 16th day of November, 2021.

CITY OF EDEN

BY: Neville Hall, Mayor

ATTEST: Deanna Hunt, City Clerk

REPORTS FROM STAFF:

a. City Manager's Report

Mayor Hall called on Mr. Mendenhall.

Mr. Mendenhall said he would like to enter into the record the November 2021 City Manager's Report and he would be happy to answer any questions. He thanked Council Member Hampton for her service and said it had been a pleasure, honor, and a privilege to work with and serve her. There were new members that would be joining Council in December and he wished her the best. He also thanked Council Member Carter for his service and it had been a pleasure, honor, and a privilege to work with and serve him. He wished him the best and expressed his appreciation for both of them.

Council Member Hampton thanked Mr. Mendenhall.

Council Member Carter said he appreciated the citizens of Eden allowing him to serve on the Council for 16 years. It had been an honor and a pleasure. He had worked with some great people on Council and felt they had made a lot of progress in the City with development in the downtown or uptown areas. He would like to see the City continue to move forward. The 785 Project was a big project for Council, getting Highway 14 connected to a future interstate, which would be big in the future.

Council Member Hampton thanked Eden for giving her the opportunity to serve. It had been a blessing to her. She was humbled by it and thanked God for the people she worked with because of how much they helped her. She appreciated how everyone had helped her. She hoped that the citizens would feel she had done a great job because she really tried to.

Mayor Hall stated that he had extra copies of the report available for anyone wishing to have one and added that it was printed in Eden's Own Journal and online.

City Manager's Report:
November 2021
City Manager Jon Mendenhall

ADMINISTRATION

Division of Design & Construction

Northridge Mobile Home Park – Roadway Construction

Construction of the new roadways in the Northridge Mobile Home Park are scheduled to resume in November. The developer completed the clearing and grading late last year but was unable to complete the construction due to contractor availability.

Proposed Crosswalk – Morgan Road

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NCDOT Traffic Services has approved the installation of a pedestrian crosswalk on Morgan Road at The Cook Block as long as the City meets NCDOT's lighting requirements. Staff is currently working with Duke Energy to obtain cost estimates on pedestrian lighting and flashing beacons. Once the total cost has been determined, staff will request a recommendation from Council.

Street Resurfacing

The FY 2021-22 Street Resurfacing Contract, No. 1 was completed on October 26. Sections of Henry Street, Park Road, Knight Street, Taft Street, Mill Avenue, and Patrick Street were repaired and resurfaced. The next street resurfacing contract is scheduled for April of 2022.

Water Main Projects Update

A crew from Haymes Brothers, Inc. worked in early October to install a 16-inch diameter water main across Mill Avenue at the intersection with N. Rickman Street. The water main connected two pipe ends installed previously north and south of the intersection. The crew installed two 45-degree bends and also used one sleeve during the tie-in work. On October 18, the Streets Department removed some of the temporary stone placed in the pavement cut by the contractor, then placed and compacted roughly 13 tons of asphalt mix near the intersection. Additional asphalt patching work along N. Rickman Street will be done by a sub-contractor.

Marketing Office

Traveling Vietnam Wall/Heritage & Heroes

We would like to give a special thanks to all who helped make the Traveling Vietnam Wall and Heritage & Heroes event a very special time for all those who visited. American Legion Post 254 did an incredible job with set-up, breakdown, and manning the wall 24 hours each day it was here. It was a true honor to work on such a special project.

WinterFest

Our 3rd annual WinterFest is set for Friday, December 3 in Grogan Park from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. There will be an outdoor movie, characters, Brunswick stew, hot cocoa bar, s'mores bar, tree lighting, games for kids, ice castle, caroling, and more!

Holiday Parades

Historic Leaksville Night-Time Christmas Parade will take place along Washington Street and Kings Highway on Friday, November 26 at 6:30 p.m.

Draper Children's Christmas Parade will take place along Fieldcrest Road on Saturday, December 4 at 11 a.m.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Bridge Street & Mill Avenue Recreation Centers

These two facilities are open Mondays 1 to 9 p.m., Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 12 to 8 p.m., and on Fridays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Those attending may participate in basketball, pickleball, track walking, or the playground. The Mill Avenue Recreation Center offers the same services with the addition of a baseball field while Bridge Street has tennis courts.

Freedom Park

Open daily from dawn to dusk, this park offers a walking track, nature trail, skateboard park, basketball courts, playground, dog park, picnic shelters, and an amphitheater.

Garden of Eden Senior Center

The Garden of Eden Senior Center is open weekdays from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. and offers paint classes, mahjonnig, pickleball (mornings and evenings offsite), exercise classes, cornhole, knit and crochet, strength and balance, legal aid, quilt guild, Friends Club, bingo, watercolor classes, craft classes, senior technology classes, and card games, along with assistance and referral for seniors.

Santa Calls and Visits

Rent-A-Santa is offered from December 1–22. Santa will be in town before Christmas and he has agreed to come to your home, office or church event. He does need money for reindeer feed and so the cost is \$30 inside the City of Eden limits, \$40 outside. Call us to schedule: 336-623-2110.

Minutes of the November 16, 2021 meeting of the City Council, City of Eden:

Phone Calls from Santa are offered December 15 and 16. We have limited spots available for Santa to call your child to find out if they're been naughty or nice, and what they would like for Christmas. We are so happy to partner with the North Pole to offer this service FREE for Eden's kids. Call us to schedule: 336-623-2110.

Sports Programs

Youth basketball registration for ages 4-19 (18- & 19-year-old players must be enrolled in and attending high school) is now being accepted and it's free! Practice has just started and games will be played on weekdays. Register online at www.edennc.us, at Eden City Hall, Bridge Street Recreation Center, or Mill Avenue Recreation Center.

Women's Fall Volleyball kicked off the first week in November. Games are played every Monday starting at 7 p.m. at the Mill Avenue Recreation Center.

We have two cornhole leagues going right now: City League for employees and their families on Mondays at the Bridge Street Recreation Center starting at 6:30 p.m., and an Open Cornhole League on Tuesdays at the Mill Avenue Recreation Center starting at 6:30 p.m.

Our Prowlers Football and Cheer Program is ending for the year with a banquet set for Saturday, December 11. We had a fantastic season and thank all the dedicated players, cheerleaders, coaches and their families for participating in our league.

PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Collections

Payments received for code enforcement fees during the month of October consisted of \$152.54 from the Rockingham County Tax Department and \$188.38 by the City.

Community

Luck Stone has acquired Ararat Quarry.

Community Appearance Commission

Members of the commission met in October to plant flowers in the downtown Draper planters.

Draper Landing

Staff met with MVP Pipeline and N.C. Wildlife Resources regarding the development of a proper boat landing.

Grants

Staff has submitted documents to the N.C. Department of Commerce for the CDBG-COVID grant as part of the final requirements for the releasement of funds.

Letters were mailed to all applicants on the CDBG-Draper project notifying them if they were (1) in the top ten to receive assistance; (2) designated as an alternate; (3) not scheduled for assistance; or (4) ineligible for the grant due to income or being located outside of the project area. Staff will begin requesting verification of their income and application information as soon as title searches on the properties are complete.

Inspections and Permits

Total Inspections Performed-October:	197 (not including fire inspections)
Total Permits Issued-October	127

Ray Commons Landmark

The landmark designation for Ray Commons, the former John B. Ray building, was approved at the October City Council meeting.

Spray Cotton Mill Local Landmark

Staff is working on the landmark designation report for Spray Cotton Mill. Plans were to discuss the landmark at the November Historic Preservation Commission meeting and possibly submit to Council in the fall.

Tree Board

At the board's October meeting, members discussed Freedom Park Nature Trail and the markers that were being installed in conjunction with N.C. Forestry Service and the Parks and Recreation Department. The board also discussed possibly doing an Arbor Day program for the children's story time at the Library, replacing several missing

Minutes of the November 16, 2021 meeting of the City Council, City of Eden:

trees on Highway 14, and also pruning some of the trees that were creating a sight obstruction. Two new members were appointed at the October City Council meeting to fill the vacant spots on the board and would be sworn in at the November Tree Board meeting.

UDO

The Planning Board met on October 26 to consider the closing of an alley on the east side of Bridge Street and to make a recommendation to the City Council on the adoption of the Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan.

Downtown and Economic Development Activities

The Boulevard

The new owner of 246 The Boulevard has begun renovations of the downstairs storefront, as well as the upstairs apartment.

Draper

A façade improvement was completed at 144 N. Fieldcrest Road while 141 N. Fieldcrest Road has been repainted. It is possible that a pet store may locate to 148 N. Fieldcrest Road after the building is remodeled.

POLICE

Staff will attend several trainings during the month of November, including Crisis Intervention Training, Regional Training Conference, and Project Safe “Call In.”

PUBLIC UTILITIES

Water Plant Receives 2020 AWOP Award

The Area Wide Optimization Program (AWOP) was developed to help water systems meet more stringent regulations and achieve higher levels of water quality. Achieving this goal means that the water’s turbidity levels were less than one-third of the allowable limits 95 percent of the time. Target turbidity levels are 0.1 ntu (nephelometric turbidity unit), well below the regulatory limit of 0.3 ntu. Water treatment plants that consistently attain such a low level of turbidity achieve significant water quality benefits by removing particles that may harbor microbial contaminants.

AWOP Awards are given each year to water systems that demonstrate outstanding turbidity removal, a key test of drinking water quality. While all drinking water systems have to meet strict state and federal drinking water standards, the systems that achieve this award met performance goals that were significantly more stringent.

The Robert A. Harris Water Filtration Plant has participated in AWOP since 2005 and recently received one of the State’s highest honors in water treatment, the Area Wide Optimization Award for 2020. This is the plant’s twelfth award and ninth straight year of achieving this recognition. Of the 150 surface water systems in the State, only 64 received the award.

b. Report on advisory committee proceedings.

(1) Strategic Planning Commission.

Mayor Hall called on Staff Advisor Cindy Adams.

Ms. Adams stated that as a staff liaison for the Strategic Planning Commission, she was very excited to make a presentation covering the proposed Two Rivers Tubing Program. The project had been thoroughly vetted and researched by both Strategic Planning Commission members and staff. It was voted on and passed unanimously by the commission board, which was solely represented by citizens. The City had been marketing its rivers since 2003. She believed the project had the potential to go a long way in living up to the words on the City’s seal: the land of two rivers. It fit perfectly into the City’s tagline of small town big outdoors. The City had been fortunate to be able to construct river access points for safe put in and takeout from the rivers and now had an awesome opportunity to add exciting programming. She presented the program in four parts in an effort make it concise and understandable: (1) history; (2) logistics; (3) safety; and (4) cost and implementation. Regarding the history component, Ms. Adams stated that the City’s model had been the program administered by the Madison Parks & Recreation Department

and Lee Mitchell, known as Mad Town Tubing. Their program was established to send people down the Dan River in an effort to promote safe outdoor recreation. They put in at the Madison River Park and take out at the 704 Access. In 2020, with no formal programming, they put 4,200 people on the river. In 2021, they put in 3,400 people on the river with 90 percent of those being from out of town. Mr. Vernon spoke with Madison's athletic director and was told that only about 20 percent of their attendees were youth with the remaining being adults. They netted \$30,000 on the program. The project fit under two goals of the Strategic Plan: (1) EV-1, which was to focus on quality of place as the core economic development strategy with the idea being to identify initiatives to improve the attractiveness of the city, gathering spaces, outdoor recreation, and trails; and (2) REC-2, which was to expand and enhance trails, including blueway trails, greenways, and parks, both as a health promotion and quality of place strategy with the idea to pursue river activities that would enhance Eden's image as an ideal location for outdoor recreation activities. Secondly, the logistics of the program included a proposed trip that was 1.9 miles and would take approximately 2.5 hours. Participants would put in at Island Ford Landing at the Smith River Greenway and take out at the N.C. Wildlife Access, better known as the boat landing. Hours of operation would be 9:30 a.m. until 7 p.m. on either Wednesdays or Thursdays running through Sunday. Shuttles would run every 30 minutes beginning at 10 a.m. with the last shuttle running at 4:30 p.m. All participants would have to sign a liability waiver as part of the registration process. Tube rentals would be \$12 per tube and \$15 per tracker tube. The City would have 100 adult flotation devices and 50 child vests to be provided as those would be required for both adults and children. A Canadian company would supply 100 high quality tubes that would be customized for the City. Custom orders must be placed at the beginning of December in order for them to be made in January/February and arrive for the 2022 season. The City would order 15 tube trackers and paddles, which were similar to small inflatable kayaks/rafts. Plans were to erect a metal building behind the current shelter, serving as the Two Rivers Tubing office, storage, etc. There was easy access to the landing just down the steps in addition to restrooms and picnic shelters in the vicinity. In regards to parking, Reynolds Brewery had purchased one acre of land on River Road and the belief was that the City should consider leasing or having a maintenance agreement for part of the space to be used by tubing patrons or at the least, the shuttle van. In order to conduct the program, one Kaufman 6' x 10' enclosed trailer and one 15-passenger van would be needed. Signage would be placed at both River Road and N.C. Wildlife Access pertaining to the program. Miscellaneous items needed would be dry packs, an ice machine, a soft drink cooler, drinks, and snacks to be sold to the patrons. In regards to safety, all tubers must sign the liability waiver and must wear the personal flotation devices (PFD). All tubers would be instructed about the Duke Energy dam and a prominent bilingual sign would be placed at the N.C. Wildlife Access on Bethlehem Church Road that would read "EXIT HERE! DO NOT CONTINUE ON RIVER." A staff member would be at the put in and the takeout locations to assist tubers. The committee contacted several agencies, which took a lot of time but answered a lot of questions. One agency was the North Carolina Wildlife Commission to gain permission for access and placement of signage. They spoke with the North Carolina League of Municipalities to ensure the City was insured for such a program and to receive guidance from their risk management representative; Eden Rescue Squad to discuss recommended safety measures; Dan River Basin Association and Three Rivers Outfitters to learn of their concerns and any other river information; the Eden Police Department to advise them of the proposed program start and to learn of their concerns; Philpott Dam personnel in regards water levels and flow concerns, which was none; the Stokes County Tourism Department in regards to alcohol consumption issues on the river; the Madison-Mayodan Rescue Squad to determine if alcohol was a problem with tubing activities, which it was not; Duke Energy to obtain their thoughts on the tubing program, which they were 100 percent in support of; and the Rockingham County Economic Development and Tourism for economic benefits and marketing, in which they agreed to market if passed by Council. In response to the stories regarding the problems with alcohol in Stokes County, Ms. Adams stated that the committee talked with Stokes County Tourism Director Tory Mabe and he stated that a private company came in and advertised parties on the river in which they even brought in party buses, which was a completely different concept from what the Two Rivers Tubing program was. That company had since been sold. Madison-Mayodan had seen no evidence of alcohol abuse or activity through their program and would certainly not be part

of the City's marketing plan as it would be a family-friendly operation. Lastly, in regards to the cost and implementation, the projected start date would be May of 2022. It would be four-month program running from mid-May to mid-September. The program would be widely marketed by both the City of Eden Marketing office and the Rockingham County Tourism office. The total cost would be \$66,000 and would include: one 15 x 51 insulated metal building that would include electrical wiring of the building, a concrete pad, an ice machine, tubes, trackers, vests, trailer, passenger van, signage, and miscellaneous items such as the dry ice packs. It also included a ten percent contingency in case there were any price increases. After implementation, the program would require management by the Parks and Recreation Department, a staff member for four months out of the year along with three part-time employees to assist with registration, tubes, PFDs, a driver, and an employee located at the N.C. Wildlife Access to aide tubers as they get out of the river. Mad Town Tubing was managed by the Madison-Mayodan Parks and Recreation director. Items that would need to be completed by the City before launching the program included creating a bilingual waiver, creating a safety video, establishing an app through the City's Information Technology Department to assist with location via use of the dry bags, establishing a 911 response plan with the Eden Rescue Squad, determining an age and height limit, conducting driver training for the shuttle driver, and creating a daily checklist for employees of the program that would include items such as water levels. Only in Your State wrote an article entitled "6 Best Lazy Rivers for Tubing in North Carolina: Floating down a natural lazy river is a quintessential North Carolina experience. With an abundance of lakes, creeks, and rivers flowing throughout the state, we're in the perfect location to explore the Tar Heel State by water! If you're looking for a way to mix it up a bit, we recommend planning an adventure at these awesome rivers in North Carolina. Grab an inner tube, some water shoes, and let's get floating!" The Dan River was listed as number two in that article. Ed McMann was an internationally known economic development and land use expert, who was with the Urban Land Institute in Washington, D.C. He stated "we have got to differentiate our assets from others in order to have a competitive advantage." Eden's beautiful rivers were what made the city different as it was founded on those assets. Place was more than just a location on a map and a sense of place was what made one city different from another. Talent attraction was presently the number one issue with industry across the country. Nestle Purina, Gildan, and others were counting on the City to create and provide quality of life opportunities for their employees. Therefore, the City needed to give people in the market today something to do as they were younger and very active. Tourism was the number one, two, and three industry in every state. Tourism was economic development. "Economic development is really the result of creating places where people want to be," said Mike Cornett, mayor of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The City had an opportunity with Two Rivers Tubing to highlight its river assets, help others experience its unique character, create a sense of place, and make Eden stand out from the rest. Coupled with trails, parks, public art, revitalized uptowns and downtowns, new industry, and new restaurants, Eden could become a real small town big outdoors destination.

Council Member Moore asked if the City already had some of the items needed for the program, such as the trailer and van due to the project cost only being \$66,000.

Ms. Adams stated that Director of Public Works Paul Dishmon conducted a lot of the research and was able to include a used van in the estimated cost of \$66,000.

Council Member Moore said it was a whole lot included for that amount of money.

Ms. Adams agreed.

Mayor Hall said he assumed Public Works employees would do a lot of the construction.

Ms. Adams said yes and added that the employees would be able to assist with things such as the concrete pads.

Council Member Ellis said he thought it was a great opportunity considering Eden was the land of two rivers. It was a positive direction for the City to go in and what better way than to work with the surrounding water. He thanked Ms. Adams for the outstanding presentation that was very informative and good for the citizens to hear.

Council Member Hunnicutt stated that he wanted to remind everyone that unfortunately there were five tubers who died on the river less than six months ago. It was beyond him why the program needed to be established at the present time or even at all. He was absolutely opposed to it and even after previous discussions regarding the program, his position remained the same. He felt it was a mistake for the City to invest in the program and felt some people would be upset if they found out the City spent \$66,000 on a tubing program.

Council Member Hampton said she had reservations similar to Council Member Hunnicutt when she first heard about the program and questioned if it would be viewed as a smack in the face to the families who recently lost their loved ones while tubing on the river. However, she began to evaluate the program and felt the City should take chances in an effort to be more careful by putting people in place on the river considering the City did not have people in place, nor any safety measures, when the tubing accident occurred. The Strategic Planning Commission was attempting to address those issues by implementing the program. If the City did not give the younger generation in the community something to do, she feared the Police Department would be giving them something to do, which would not be good. She hoped it would be a successful, positive program that would eliminate future fatalities.

Council Member Hampton made a motion to approve the Two Rivers Tubing program.

Council Member Epps said Council had the same opposition regarding Freedom Park but sometimes they needed to step out. The park had been graciously accepted and successfully worked out. He seconded the motion.

Council Member Moore, Council Member Nooe, Council Member Hampton, Council Member Epps, and Council Member Ellis voted in favor of the motion. Council Member Hunnicutt and Council Member Carter voted in opposition of the motion. The motion carried, 5-2.

Mayor Hall said if the City was able to make a profit in the same manner that Madison did, he felt it would be great to consider funneling the proceeds of the project to the Eden Rescue Squad in order to fund water safety equipment. Partnering with them would make it safer for everyone.

Council Member Ellis suggested giving the Eden Rescue Squad extra funding in the first couple years like Mayor Hall suggested as he thought it was an outstanding idea.

Mayor Hall said the program was a project being started and if it did not work out, the City would not continue with it.

(2) Planning Organization Boards.

Mayor Hall called on Ms. Stultz.

Ms. Stultz said the Planning Board had been inordinately busy the past few weeks. They were currently in the process of final review of the Pedestrian Plan that was funded through North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) a couple years ago. The Comprehensive Plan consultants had reviewed the plan and made a few recommendations to the consultant for the Pedestrian Plan; therefore, Council would likely see the draft of the Pedestrian Plan in January. The Comprehensive Plan was moving along according to

schedule and she hoped to have some more public input sessions and review in January and February of 2022. As the steering committee for the Comprehensive Plan, the Planning Board would meet on November 30 to go over the most recent additions to the draft. The small area plan for Uptown Eden was coming together with projected improvements for Monroe Street and other parts of the area, which would be reviewed by Eden Downtown Development Incorporation (EDDI), Uptown Eden, and the Planning Board before being sent to Council for approval. Afterwards, the plan was to start on the small area plan for the Draper area. The Community Appearance Commission and Historic Preservation Commission had successfully met and were beginning to discuss projects they hoped to accomplish based on the funding they received. The Tree Board meeting was cancelled earlier in the week. Community and Economic Development Manager Randy Hunt worked with EDDI and the other merchants' associations; they were all active at the moment, which was a good thing.

Council Member Carter asked about the progress of the crosswalk on the Cook Block.

Ms. Stultz said that Mr. Hunt had talked to NCDOT about the crosswalk and they were trying to work through the things required to make that happen.

Council Member Carter asked if the crosswalk had been approved.

Ms. Stultz replied not exactly. A crosswalk that was not at an intersection was more complicated and expensive. Staff had been going back and forth with NCDOT in efforts to get it worked out and be able to come back before Council with a cost.

Mr. Mendenhall said the specific issue was that NCDOT was requiring pedestrian lighting that involved an unknown cost. Staff was trying to confirm how much pedestrian lighting would be needed and how much it would cost before presenting the crosswalk to Council. NCDOT had approved the concept but the question was the total cost.

(3) Parks Commission

Mayor Hall called on Mr. Vernon.

Mr. Vernon said the Parks Commission did not meet during the month of November but planned to meet on December 7 at 6 p.m. at City Hall. Eden Parks and Recreation finished up the football season, which had proved to be a successful season. While the 8U team did win the championship, it was not all about winning but rather about teaching the kids skills they could use later in life. The program had a good group of coaches, parents, and kids that participated. The football banquet would be held on December 11 at Trinity Wesleyan Church in their gym and he invited Council to attend. Youth basketball practice began two weeks ago. The Peanuts, ages 4-5, were practicing on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4 p.m. at Bridge Street Recreation Center. The Mites, ages 6-7, were practicing on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. at Bridge Street Recreation Center while ages 8-10 were practicing on Mondays and Wednesdays at 4:30 p.m. at Mill Avenue Recreation Center. The Midgets, ages 11-12, were practicing on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. at Mill Avenue Recreation Center. The Juniors, ages 13-15, were practicing on Mondays and Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. at both Mill Avenue Recreation Center and Bridge Street Recreation Center. Currently, Eden Parks and Recreation, along with the Boys & Girls Club, were participating in the basketball league together. They would try to pick up the YMCA if they had enough teams to participate. Women's fall volleyball league played every Monday night at 7 p.m. They had six competitive teams in the league.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Minutes of the November 16, 2021 meeting of the City Council, City of Eden:

- a. Approval and adoption of the October 19, 2021 regular meeting minutes.
- b. Approval to adjust the fee schedule pertaining to the Parks and Recreation Department.

Mr. Vernon wrote in a memo that the Freedom Park ball fields were presently bid out in December of each year for the upcoming year. There was no deposit currently required and many times during the upcoming year, the ball fields sat idle due to renters choosing to play in other locations. He spoke with other municipalities and found what he believed to be a good solution to the problem. The original thought was to require a \$100 deposit per field to be paid when the fields were reserved in December. However, that would likely result in very few renters as it would require organizations reserving 10 weekends to pay \$3,000 up front. Therefore, it was recommended to allow each organization to list the weekends they wanted to reserve the field(s) and after City staff completed the upcoming year's schedule, the organizations would be contacted and made aware of the weekends they were approved for. If the organizations decided not to use the field(s) at least two weeks prior to the rental date and the City was able to find another renter, the original organization would not owe anything. However, if the City was unable to secure another renter for that weekend, the original organization would be required to pay a deposit of \$300 to the City. Deposit refunds would be issued due to inclement weather.

ORDINANCE AMENDING THE TAX AND SERVICE RATES FOR PARKS AND RECREATION
FOR CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EDEN

WHEREAS, the Tax and Service Rates for the City of Eden is set forth in the FY 2021-2022 Budget and sets forth the applicable fees for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation fees are included in the Tax and Service Rates; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the City of Eden to set fair and reasonable fees for Parks and recreation services and to make necessary and reasonable accommodations for the expenses likely to be incurred in operating these recreational services; and

WHEREAS, the City of Eden desires to amend the rates listed in Section 9 (Parks and Recreation Fees) of the City of Eden Tax and Service Rates as listed below; and

BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Eden, North Carolina, that Section 9, Tax and Service Rates, Sub-Section 9 Parks and Recreation Fees set forth in FY 2021-2022 Budget Ordinance is amended as follows:

9. PARKS & REC RECREATION FEES

Softball Field Rental (Includes tournament use)

- City Residents Field Rental - \$70.00 per day Mill Ave, Dehart / Freedom \$300 per field (1) field lined per day if no-show
- Non-City Residents Field Rental - \$100.00 per day Mill Ave, Dehart / Freedom \$300 per (1) field lined per day if no-show
- City Residents Lighting Use - \$15.00 per hour
- Non-City Residents Lighting Use - \$20.00 per hour
- Field Equipment Rental - \$25.00 per day
- Refundable Damage Deposit - \$50.00

APPROVED, ADOPTED AND EFFECTIVE this 16th day of November, 2021.

CITY OF EDEN

BY: Neville Hall, Mayor

ATTEST: Deanna Hunt, City Clerk

- c. Adoption of a Fire Services Agreement with Rockingham County.

Fire Chief Harden wrote in a memo that the contract between the Eden Fire Department and Rockingham County stated that the City's Fire Department would provide fire protection to any county building within the Eden Fire Department jurisdiction and would provide mutual aid assistance to other county departments upon request. Per the contract, the National Incident Management System (NIMS) would be utilized on emergency scenes. The contract, which would be in effect until June 30, 2022, provided that Rockingham County would pay the City of Eden Fire

Minutes of the November 16, 2021 meeting of the City Council, City of Eden:

Department \$2,400 a year. The contract was one the Fire Department had entered into in previous years with no issues. After being reviewed by Ms. Gilley and Fire Chief Harden, they both recommended Council's approval.

A copy of the contract is available in the City Clerk's office.

A motion was made by Council Member Carter to approve the Consent Agenda. Council Member Hampton seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried, 7-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Hall said he was honored to represent the City at the ribbon cutting for the new Homer E. Wright Jr. Student Center at Morehead High School on November 15. It was a long undertaking that was funded by Mr. Wright. He encouraged everyone, especially those who previously attended Morehead High School, to go by and look at how modern the center was. WinterFest would take place at Grogan Park on December 3. It was an event that grew each year and was a lot of fun to participate in. The Historic Leaksville Night-time Christmas Parade would take place on November 26 at 6:30 p.m. followed by the Draper Children's Christmas Parade on December 4 at 11 a.m. He asked everyone to come out and support those events.

Council Member Carter thanked his family, citizens, and the Eden Professional Firefighters who attended his last Council meeting. He stated that several of the firefighters would be retiring at the end of the year.

Council Member Epps thanked everyone who allowed him to serve on Council for another four years and he hoped to be able to do something helpful and prosperous for the City.

CLOSED SESSION:

- a. Closed session pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11 (a)(3) Legal.

A motion was made by Council Member Carter to go into closed session. Council Member Moore seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried, 7-0.

Council Member Hunnicutt exited the meeting.

A motion was made by Council Member Hampton to return to open session. Council Member Nooe seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried, 6-0.

ADJOURNMENT:

As there was no further business to discuss, a motion was made by unanimous consent to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Deanna Hunt
City Clerk

ATTEST:

Neville Hall
Mayor