

CITY OF EDEN, N.C.

The regular meeting of the City Council, City of Eden, was held on Tuesday, April 19, 2022 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:	Gerald Ellis Jerry Epps Phillip Hunnicutt Kenny Kirkman Bernie Moore Bruce Nooe Tommy Underwood
City Manager:	Jon Mendenhall
City Attorney:	Erin Gilley
City Clerk:	Deanna Hunt
Media:	Robin 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. Mayor Pro Tem Bernie Moore gave an invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Fire Chief Todd Harden.

PROCLAMATIONS, RECOGNITIONS, AND PRESENTATIONS:

a. Recognition: Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

Programs Supervisor Carla Huffman wrote in a memo: Time is requested for the VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) volunteers to be recognized at the April meeting. These volunteers provide a free tax assistance service to the citizens of Eden and surrounding areas. They prepared nearly 500 tax returns during this very challenging year.

Mayor Hall called on Ms. Huffman.

Ms. Huffman said the senior center offered a free income tax assistance program for everyone, known as the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. The volunteers put in endless hours of online training through the IRS, keeping up with new tax guidelines that kept changing. Volunteers began taking in tax information towards the end of January and continued doing so until close to April 15. The volunteers processed 439 tax returns this year for people in Eden and the surrounding area. Some places charged as much as \$300 to process tax returns, but the senior center did it for free, which ultimately saved the participants over \$130,000. She wanted to extend a big thank you to the VITA volunteers. The leader of the program was John Tushack. The City received a grant from VITA, which allowed Ms. Huffman to reimburse the volunteers for their mileage; some volunteers traveled from neighboring cities to Eden each day. Volunteers included Charlie Rice, George Page, and Jennifer Taylor. The City's Information Technology Department assisted the center with the VITA program by providing and supporting the computers and printers used to process the tax returns. Whenever there was an issue with any equipment, the department's staff was quick to respond and fix the problem. She presented the volunteers and Information Technology Analyst Taylor Rorrer and Information Technology Technician Joseph Smith with tokens of appreciation. Virginia Steele and Mary Staley were instrumental to the program as well because they performed the intake component of the tax returns. She expressed her appreciation for all of the volunteers and work they performed and added that she did not know what she would do without them considering that the City had to offer assistance programs for seniors in order to be certified.

b. Proclamation: Arbor Day

Minutes of the April 19, 2022 meeting of the City Council, City of Eden:

Mayor Hall read the proclamation:

PROCLAMATION: ARBOR DAY 2022

WHEREAS, in 1872, J. Sterling Morton proposed to the Nebraska Board of Agriculture that a special day be set aside for the planting of trees, and

WHEREAS, this holiday, called Arbor Day, was first observed with the planting of more than a million trees in Nebraska, and

WHEREAS, Arbor Day is now observed throughout the nation and the world, and

WHEREAS, trees can reduce the erosion of our precious topsoil by wind and water, cut heating and cooling costs, moderate temperature, clean the air, produce life-giving oxygen, and provide habitat for wildlife, and

WHEREAS, trees are a renewable resource giving us paper, wood for our homes, fuel for our fires and countless other wood products, and

WHEREAS, trees in our city increase property values, enhance the economic vitality of business areas, and beautify our community, and

WHEREAS, the City of Eden has been named a Tree City USA community by the National Arbor Day Foundation for the 26th year, and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Neville Hall, Mayor of the City of Eden, do hereby proclaim Friday, April 29, 2022 as Arbor Day in the City of Eden, and I urge all citizens to celebrate Arbor Day and to support efforts to protect our trees and woodlands, and to plant trees to promote the well-being of this and future generations.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Seal of the City of Eden, North Carolina on this, the 19th day of April, 2022.

By: Neville Hall, Mayor

Attest: Deanna Hunt, City Clerk

c. Proclamation: Police Week

Mayor Hall asked Police Chief Clint Simpson and his staff to join him at the podium as he read the proclamation. Mayor Hall said the City was very fortunate to have the group of people it did working within the Police Department as they did an outstanding job.

PROCLAMATION: POLICE WEEK 2022

WHEREAS, there are more than 800,000 law enforcement officers serving in communities across the United States, including the dedicated members of the Eden Police Department; and

WHEREAS, the Eden Police Department plays an essential role in safeguarding the rights and freedoms of all members of the community; and

WHEREAS, it is important that all citizens know and understand the duties, responsibilities, hazards, and sacrifices of their law enforcement agency, and that members of our law enforcement agency recognize their duty to serve the people by safeguarding life and property, by protecting them against violence and disorder, and by protecting the innocent against deception and the weak against oppression; and

WHEREAS, the 48 sworn and 6 support men and women of the Eden Police Department unceasingly provide this vital public service; and

Now, therefore be it proclaimed, that the Eden City Council hereby declares the week of May 15 to May 21, 2022 to be National Police Week in the City of Eden. The Eden City Council calls upon all citizens to join in commemorating law

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enforcement officers, past and present, who, by their faithful and loyal devotion to their responsibilities, have rendered a dedicated service to their communities and have established for themselves an enviable and enduring reputation for preserving the rights and security of all citizens.

The Eden City Council publicly salutes the service of law enforcement officers in our community and in communities across the nation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Seal of the City of Eden, North Carolina on this, the 19th day of April, 2022.

By: Neville Hall, Mayor

Attest: Deanna Hunt, City Clerk

d. Proclamation: Public Works Week

Mayor Hall asked Public Works Director Paul Dishmon to join him at the podium as he read the proclamation. Mayor Hall added that the Public Works divisions were obviously vital to the operation of the entire city. They worked hands on with almost every project that the City was involved with and he appreciated the crews for all they did.

PROCLAMATION: PUBLIC WORKS WEEK 2022

WHEREAS, public works infrastructure, facilities and services are of critical importance to the health, safety, economy and overall well-being of our community; and,

WHEREAS, such facilities and services could not be provided without the dedicated efforts of public works professionals, engineers, and administrators, representing all levels of government, who are responsible for and must plan, design, construct, inspect, operate and maintain the public works facilities essential to serve our citizens; and,

WHEREAS, the efficiency of the qualified and dedicated personnel who staff public works functions is materially influenced by the people's attitude and understanding of the importance of the work they perform; and,

WHEREAS, it is in the public interest for our citizens, civic leaders and children to learn and understand the importance of vital public works programs such as drinking water, sanitary and storm sewers, streets and highways, public fleets, and solid waste collection and disposal; and,

WHEREAS, the theme for this year's celebration is "Ready and Resilient," and 2022 marks the 63rd annual national Public Works Week sponsored by the American Public Works Association.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Neville Hall, Mayor of the City of Eden, do hereby proclaim the week of May 15-21, 2022 as Public Works Week in the City of Eden and I call upon all citizens and civic leaders in this community to gain knowledge of, and maintain a progressive interest in the public works needs and programs vital to our everyday lives. In addition, to recognize the daily contributions which public works officials make to ensure our health, safety, comfort, and quality of life.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Seal of the City of Eden, North Carolina on this, the 19th day of April, 2022.

By: Neville Hall, Mayor

Attest: Deanna Hunt, City Clerk

e. Presentation: MHS Student Testimonials from Job Shadowing.

Marketing & Special Events Manager Cindy Adams wrote in a memo: Time is requested at the April 19, 2022 City Council Meeting to allow a few Morehead High School students to give a short testimonial about their experiences during our Students in Government Shadowing Day that took place on March 17.

Mayor Hall called on Ms. Adams.

Ms. Adams said 33 Morehead High School (MHS) students participated in an all-day Students in Government Shadowing Day with the City that was sponsored by the Strategic Planning Commission on March 17. She displayed a picture taken of all the students and employees who participated. The students shadowed City mentors in the following departments/divisions: fleet maintenance, engineering, finance, marketing, parks and recreation, senior center, legal (city attorney), police, fire, streets, water filtration, facilities and grounds, solid waste, wastewater treatment, and community and economic development. It was an awesome and exciting day filled with high energy for everyone involved, students and employees. She asked some of the City employees who had students shadow them about the experience and they all had the same answers: it was an honor to host them; students were engaged; students were enthusiastic; and students were respectful. Several even mentioned the possibility that some of the students could very well be the future leaders and workers for the City of Eden. They took their job very serious that day and it was very impressive to watch. She was delighted that two students were present at the meeting, along with Christy Hensley who was the career development coordinator for the high school. She mentioned that Ms. Hensley did a phenomenal job and always gave more than 100 percent at everything she did, adding that the City was thankful for her. She was also a member of the Strategic Planning Commission and gave credit to Ms. Hensley for the idea of the program. As a result, the City partnered with Ms. Hensley to make it happen. She called on Ms. Hensley and the two students present at the meeting.

Ms. Hensley said she asked the students to share about their job shadow experience, their name, the department they shadowed in, something they learned or found interesting, their future plans, and one word to describe their experience for that day.

Zoriah Martin said she job shadowed City Attorney Erin Gilley. Her future plan was to become an FBI agent. She said the trip to the courthouse was very fun, especially because she had her friends with her. Ms. Gilley showed Ms. Martin the courtroom, what her job was in the courtroom, and how she communicated with the judge. She said she would definitely shadow again next year. Her one word to describe the experience was inspiring.

Madison Land said she shadowed the Police Department and one thing she found interesting was that the students were able to participate in ride alongs and fingerprinting, which she found pretty cool. Her future plans were to attend Clemson University in the fall and pursue a major in criminal justice with a minor in psychology. She hoped to become a forensic psychologist. She thanked the City of Eden for allowing the students to shadow City employees. One word she used to describe the experience was eye-opening.

Ms. Hensley said she invited several students to the meeting but there were several conflicts with sports, theater, and so forth. She had a few comments from several of the students that she wanted to share. Jose Rios job shadowed in the Wastewater Treatment Division. He said he really enjoyed working with Chief Operator Chris Powell at the wastewater treatment plant. It was fun to see how the machines worked, as well as all the safety precautions that went into making the river fun, beautiful, and safe. His one word to describe the experience was interesting. Cheyenne Anderson, Ja'Torrie Scales, and Jessica Sanchez Knight wanted to thank Parks and Recreation Director Terry Vernon for their job shadow experience. They learned a lot about the different parts of the river. They enjoyed visiting the various parks and learned about the future improvements on how to make them better for the citizens. One said they liked going to the parks that they had never been to before in Eden. Mr. Vernon was really nice, very knowledgeable, and explained everything thoroughly. All three of those students were members of the high school's health science academy. Their future plans were to attend college and major in nursing. The shadowing experience exposed them to many opportunities that the City had available for people to get and stay fit and live a healthy life; for that reason, their one word to describe the experience was thankful. Natalie Houlton job shadowed at the Fire Department. She said it was an amazing experience. She really loved the smoke out in the afternoon. Everyone at the fire station was so kind and helpful. She was grateful for the services that the firefighters provided to the city. Ms. Hensley said she could go on and on with student testimonials. She conducted a survey of the 33 students who participated after the

job shadowing experience and they were to rate the questions on a scale of one to five with one being ‘strongly disagree’ and five being ‘strongly agree.’ All of the questions were ranked with a 4.77 or higher. One question asked ‘Would you recommend participating in this program to another student,’ of which 100 percent of the students answered yes. The survey also asked ‘Was the job shadow experience a valuable use of your time,’ of which 4.93 percent said they strongly agreed. At the end of the job shadow experience that afternoon, each student shared one thing they had learned and afterwards, her heart was overflowing. Staff was truly working with their students and leaving a mark on their lives as they were leaving a mark on theirs as well. She hoped MHS would be allowed to continue the job shadow program and that the students would consider investing their human capital back into the city right after graduation from high school or college. Dr. Moody sent his regrets that he could not present at the meeting due to another engagement but on behalf of Dr. Moody and herself, they wanted to say thank you to the City of Eden for their constant support of the high school’s students and the development of their young adults. The experiences that the students gained as a result of their job shadowing with the City was invaluable for their future career plans and aspirations. They were extremely grateful for the experience and wanted to thank the City again for their continued support of MHS, their students, and their continued growth. Their one word was honored. They were honored to be partners in education. She presented the Mayor and City Council with their Partnership in Education certificate, adding that one copy would hang in their display case at the high school. She also presented a certificate to Jim Burnette, president of the Strategic Planning Commission due to his leadership of the commission board. One of the goals of the commission board was to partner with the high school and that indeed was what they were doing. Ms. Hensley thanked Ms. Adams, Mr. Burnette, and all the City officials who gave of their time to share their passion with the students and they looked forward to doing it again. The comments she received from the students were incredible and they had so much fun. She said there were two types of people in the world, those that went to MHS and those that wished they could.

Mayor Hall thanked Ms. Hensley and said he was present the morning of the shadowing program. He could sense a lot of uneasiness amongst the students as nobody really knew what to expect, but when he returned in the afternoon, it was a whole different attitude. He believed everybody thoroughly enjoyed it and he knew they learned a lot. Following the shadowing experience, one student said she realized the police were on her side instead of being scared of them. Police Chief Simpson said the entire program was worth it if just one person changed their opinion of what the police officers did. He added that it was a great idea and thanked Mr. Burnette and Ms. Hensley for putting it together, as well as Ms. Adams for pairing the students and staff.

SET MEETING AGENDA:

A motion was made by Council Member Moore to set the meeting agenda. Council Member Ellis 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:

Mayor Hall asked Ms. Gilley to read the City’s policy regarding public comments.

Lawrence Matthew Hall of 1128 and 1130 Friendly Road in Eden said he was turned down approximately three or four months ago on a piece of property that he was going to use for a junkyard. Within the last two months, Council voted on a piece of property that was zoned residential with at least 75 cars on it. He did not want to call any names but just wanted to be treated fairly. His piece of property was under a grandfather clause until it was switched. It had been that way since he was a kid. He did not feel like he was treated right. He wanted Council to look over it and see if there was anything that could be changed about it.

Scottie Eanes of 644 Summit Road in Eden said he was reviewing the budget that Council would be discussing at the meeting and was wondering if Council was going to consider lights for the walking track at Freedom Park. He had done a lot of complaining over the past six to eight months about things needing to be done at Freedom Park, of which Mr. Vernon and Acting Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation Ray Thomas had answered and resolved a lot of. Recently, there was a problem at the park with a slide that had been roped off for the last couple of days, but some kids tore it down. He could not get in touch with Mr. Thomas on the phone, so he called a member of Council who got in touch with Mr. Thomas and he came to the park within 20 minutes. He appreciated what Mr. Vernon and Mr. Thomas were doing. A couple of people thought he was after somebody's job, but he was not; he wanted things done at the park that needed to be done and nobody was doing them. However, they have started making sure things were being done. He wanted them to know it was appreciated and was being noticed. People were talking about it in the park because he was down there each day with his grandchildren. He wanted to make sure that people knew that if there was a problem, they needed to reach out to someone and they would take care of it. He would still like to see lights around the walking track for people that work second and third shifts. He believed it would be a good idea for the park.

Rhonda Price of 600 and 603 Monroe Street in Eden said she was representing herself and her husband, David Price. They owned both locations on Monroe Street, David Price Auto Works and David Price Towing. She wanted to bring back the one-way traffic issue on Monroe Street, even though she realized Council had voted on it. For several months and nearly one year, the Uptown Merchants had happily assumed that the much-anticipated change was moving forward; that was the impression they were given by different members of the departments within the City. On March 24, they clearly saw that the traffic change for Monroe Street was boldly displayed on the information that was for the draft of the Comprehensive Plan for the entire city. The representatives from Stuart fielded questions from both property owners, merchants, and Council who were present, including Mayor Hall. They were also told that their studies showed that indeed, the width of Monroe Street was adequate and that an astounding 12 to 15 much-needed parking places could be achieved with the change in the traffic pattern. She wanted to add that she was disappointed by the attendance of Council, as well as merchant owners and just the public. She said everyone realized that there had been small breakout meetings in different areas where the Comprehensive Plan was discussed. She hoped that in the future there would be some easier, better ways to get information to the citizens who had a vested interest in what was happening downtown. She welcomed Council to come and talk to the merchants in the area. She hoped they would reconsider when the Comprehensive Plan was brought to Council at the May City Council meeting. The City had paid the consultants a lot of money to talk to the merchants over the past year in order to come up with the ideas in the plan, adding that the merchants did provide the one-way street concept to the consultants to consider.

Diana Biggs of 110 Vaughn Street in Eden thanked Mayor Hall and Council for their time and consideration of her time. She was approaching Council as a citizen of Eden, a resident, and a business owner of the Draper section to comment on item 10c of the meeting's agenda on the purchase of the Draper Elementary School. She was in favor of the purchase of the school as long as it was done for the right purpose. She hoped and prayed that it was not a wolf in sheep's clothing moment for the City to obtain the building and eventually tear it down. Residents had fought to keep the school and were now fighting to keep the building. She spoke with several people that could not attend the meeting due to ball games and other children's activities, but they felt the same way that she did. She hoped when that item of the agenda came up, that Council would tell the citizens what their plans were for the Draper Elementary School building and the surrounding property because the rumors going around were that the City wanted to purchase the building just to tear it down. When she tried to tell people differently, they did not listen; therefore, everyone was simply wanting to know what was happening with it.

Jerry Boothe of 412 S. Byrd Street in Eden said he did not get to attend a lot of meetings because he worked a night shift but he was proud of Eden and its elected officials and what they were doing. He was present to discuss the purchase of Draper Elementary School. There was a meeting held in the past in an attempt to communicate with Draper merchants and residents about fixing things up and assisting the area of town. The

school building could be used for a lot in the community and it was located on the side of town where people came in from Danville, Va., and surrounding areas. He thought it could be used for a good purpose and it was a good opportunity for the City. He did not want to see it be used for apartments. He wanted to see Eden move forward. He trusted that Council had the knowledge to make the right decision. The citizens were looking forward, not looking back. He thanked Council for the job they did and for the community he lived in, as well as all of the police and firefighters. The City was blessed and he was looking up. He would like to see the City purchase the school building and use it for a good cause.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was none at this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Presentation of Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget Message and Budget Ordinance; consideration to call a public hearing for adoption of the Budget Ordinance.

Mayor Hall called on City Manager Jon Mendenhall.

Mr. Mendenhall said it was a lengthy document but he wanted to go through it as there were some exciting things and other items that needed to be discussed. Mr. Mendenhall reviewed the budget message. He presented for Council's review and consideration the proposed budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1. He was able to report to Council that the City would discharge all of its financial obligations for the current budget year in the proper manner, including the repayment of debt totaling \$2,278,541. Global inflation was at a 40-year high, but provisions had been made for the potential of inflationary impacts on goods and services; additional contingency had been planned for to counteract this eventuality. Since inflation could not be easily predicted, the contingency was a planning number that was designed to backstop overages related to inflation in operating lines (past the point where those lines had already been escalated). In other words, the initial lines were escalated and a contingency was provided to backstop overages should inflation or recession transpire. Additionally, management had implemented and would continue to enforce a circumspect view on expenses, purchases, and costs including a soft-hiring freeze on administrative positions, fuel conservation, and delays of some capital purchases. Staff had discussed it internally and thought it was the right thing to do. They did not hope for a recession and did not want to see it occur, but also did not think that hope was a course of action. It was easier to plan for it now while moving into a new budget rather than during the middle of the fiscal year. In line with those measures, sales tax revenue projected for the budget was projected in a straight-line (flat) scenario, even though the City's partners at the NC League of Municipalities had projected a 3.75 percent increase. Rather, the City escalated at a 0 percent rate so that an extra contingency, where sales taxes had not been escalated, was already included in the budget. It was important for citizens and Council to know that staff was planning and preparing. By projecting sales tax revenue more conservatively, management had built in a recessionary buffer to the budget since sales tax revenue would be the most adversely effected revenue stream in any potential recessionary scenario. He complimented the Finance Department staff for running several versions of numbers. They had also researched the 2008 recession impact and looked at how much the City's revenue stream depreciated and how hard the City was hit, which was their jumping off point to plan for a potential recession moving forward in the upcoming fiscal year. However, there was good news in the budget. To begin with, in the current fiscal year, the City had paid off a large amount of debt, \$2.2 million. The budget, as presented, was a spending plan for the fiscal year beginning July 1 and ending June 30, 2023. Pursuant to NCGS 159-8, the budget presented was balanced as required by law. In the budget, the operating expenditures of the City remained flat, but careful and precise expenditures were being provided for in order to enhance public safety, improve general welfare, and to continue guarding the public health. It should be noted that no new financing was part of the budget, rather all the new items were being paid for on a PAYGO basis meaning "pay for as you go" rather than financed. The City was not incurring any new debt in the budget, which was a very good thing. No new debt would be encumbered or levied against future taxpayers, future residents, or the

current taxpayers and residents. There were three main categories in which the City provided its services: public safety, general welfare, and public health. Under the public safety category, the City would provide four new police cars, purchase self-contained breathing apparatuses for the fire and public works departments, which included the water and sewer plants, and purchase new police radios to account for narrow banding. In the general welfare line, the City was looking at resurfacing the following streets: Blackstock Street, Monroe Street, Field Street, Greenwood Street, Hollingsworth Street, Farrell Street, Gracie Street, Briarwood Drive, Fourth Avenue, and D Street. It would also be working on a small area plan for the Draper neighborhood, including the downtown business district. The City had applied for and received a public education governmental programming grant to expand public information in what was known as the PEG Channel, which was how the City broadcasted its meetings and communicated on the County's public information channel. Administration funded a pocket park as proposed by the Strategic Planning Commission for The Boulevard area. It also funded historic signage and markers requested by the Historic Preservation Commission. He recalled when Council met with the two groups, as well as the Parks Commission, last summer and asked them to identify and prioritize different things that they would like to see completed. The groups came up with a long list and staff had to pare it down but there were some things that they requested staff put in the budget. The Tree Board requested funding for Arbor Day, the nature walk, and tree markers, which were all tree and horticultural education opportunities. The Community Appearance Commission requested downtown plantings. Money was being included in the budget for the Prowlers Youth Sports Program, which was reinvesting in the City's youth sports and athletics in the community. Allocations were made for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for the retention of employees, and projects to improve efficiency and resiliency of public services. From time to time, discussion took place regarding how the City provided public services and he believed it was important for the Council to realize such, but also for the public because public services were very much a people-driven operation. The citizens relied on City employees, the police officers, firefighters, and public works employees. Up until approximately two to three weeks ago, the City was running during this entire great resignation period of only two to three percent turnover rate. However, it was up to five percent at the present time while others in the county were at 20 percent, which meant they were turning over their staff 20 percent of the time. On behalf of management and the employees, he thanked Council for looking after employee retention because it was an important thing. The City had not seen the service level decline or that type of turnover that other places had, which was a very positive thing. Funds for street improvements in the Leaksville downtown area would be allocated, as well as the merit pay program for the upcoming fiscal year. The third category of expenditure was public health, which many may believe was handled by the County. However, clean drinking water and safe sanitary wastewater were all part of public health. Under that section, it was budgeted to purchase equipment to allow for greater efficiency and water line and sewer line construction, including a dump truck, an excavator, and a loader. It was also budgeted to replace sludge dump valves at the water treatment plant, upgrade generator switch gear and PLC at the water treatment plant, rebuild drinking water filters at the water treatment plant, renovate sludge scraper #4 at the water treatment plant sedimentation basin, renovate the influent bar screen at the wastewater treatment plant, rehabilitate a clarifier at the wastewater treatment plant, add six backup and standby generators at the wastewater pump stations, replace approximately 2,520 feet of water line on Circle Drive, Briarwood Drive, Short Street, Jackson Street, and Stephen Street, and design the replacement of approximately 1,960 linear feet of water line to plan for future replacement. The City was getting into a cycle of designing in one fiscal year and constructing it in the next fiscal year; this would be the beginning of a cycle of moving forward each year, cycling through water line design and construction. All sanitary sewer collection system works related to the Environmental Protection Agency Administrative Order of Consent (EPA-AOC) would be provided for as part of grant funds. There was a separate grant project budget for such and was kept in a separate account and was not part of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). At some point, the City would have to look at the CIP in that regard and make sure that it had sufficient funds allocated and set aside for ongoing sewer maintenance and construction. Some other ways in which the City participated in public health was in sanitation, also known as solid waste. The purchase of a knuckle boom loader would be used to maintain the vehicle replacement plan for solid waste while the allocation of funding for greenway development would provide recreation facilities for an active and healthy lifestyle for residents, specifically on projects prioritized by the Strategic Planning Commission, Parks Commission, and in conjunction with redevelopment of former industrial facilities supported by grants in aid

from the North Carolina General Assembly, among other partners. There was provision in the budget to work on the greenway trail in the Spray section of town. The budget proposal included no property tax increase, which kept the rate the same at \$0.6090 per \$100 of valuation. This was the 14th year in a row since 2008 that there had not been a tax increase. There was, however, a rate escalator of \$0.50 on all water and sewer fees proposed in order to maintain the provision of clean drinking water and the proper treatment of wastewater due not only to the rising costs, but also to pay for the substantial debt associated with the EPA-AOC. There was also a pass-through fee due to the County proposing to raise the solid waste fee \$1.00 again in the upcoming year, which was part of \$1.00 per five years of ongoing cost. This would be year two of that increase. Therefore, administration proposed passing that cost along to the consumer, increasing it from \$19.75 to \$20.75. Updates to other rates and charges had been undertaken to bring those in line with cost, countywide and regionwide. The City was trying to be competitive as it moved forward into this new inflation type environment. The proposed general fund budget in its totality was \$17,630,200 and the ad valorem tax rate was \$0.6090 per \$100 of valuation. The proposed water and sewer fund budget was \$11,848,900 and the proposed self-insurance fund budget was \$3,739,700. He commended and applauded each resident, volunteer, elected official, and employee for their hard work and the positive things they were doing. He also thanked Director of Finance and Personnel Tammie McMichael and Assistant Director of Finance Amy Winn for their help in the budget process. Copies of the budget would be made available in the clerk's office at City Hall. As provided by law, the budget was submitted on April 7. Staff was not asking for a vote at the present meeting. The public hearing would be scheduled in May if it was the Council's pleasure to do so.

Mayor Hall thanked Mr. Mendenhall for his work on the budget, noting that he obviously worked hard on it considering he would come by City Hall at night and see Mr. Mendenhall's office light on while he was working. He also thanked Ms. McMichael, Ms. Winn, and the entire staff for the work they did. The department heads had to turn their budget in to administration and negotiate over a period of time until there was a balanced budget. Fourteen years without a tax increase took a whole lot of sharpening the pencil due to the cost of everything increasing. He again thanked administration for presenting Council with a balanced budget and added that he was aware it had not been easy but he appreciated their hard work.

Council Member Ellis said he wanted to compliment the City for keeping the property tax at a rate of \$0.6090 for the last 14 years. He thought it was outstanding for the City as it went forward and applauded administration for that as well.

Council Member Nooe said sewer capital improvement was mentioned and asked if funds would be added for such in the upcoming budget year or the next budget year considering there was only \$57,000 currently proposed.

Mr. Mendenhall said the \$57,000 was likely not sufficient for the upcoming fiscal year and said staff could move money around to increase it. He would meet with the working group to see how much money they felt they would need in the upcoming fiscal year. Moving forward to years two through 10 of the CIP, it would probably be advantageous to allocate more funds in that area. Staff could do so before the CIP was presented to Council in May. He asked Council Member Nooe if he had a target number or if he wanted staff to evaluate it.

Council Member Nooe said to look at it because the City did not want to get into a situation where it did not have funds to make the necessary repairs and improvements.

Mr. Mendenhall said staff would do that.

Council Member Underwood thanked Mr. Mendenhall for the job that he performed, as well as his staff. As previously discussed, he would like to see the City get to a point in the future where it could start giving back to its citizens.

Council Member Moore said he liked the PAYGO concept.

A motion was made by Council Member Underwood to call a public hearing for adoption of the Budget Ordinance at the May 17 City Council meeting. Council Member Ellis seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried, 7-0.

A copy of the proposed 2022-2023 budget is available for inspection in the City Clerk's Office and online at www.edennc.us.

b. Consideration to adopt a resolution to declare Eden as a Bee City USA.

Ms. Adams wrote in a memo: Time is requested at the April 19, 2022 City Council Meeting to deliver information concerning our desire to become a Bee City USA. The application process will be explained. We will ask for an adoption of the resolution that needs to accompany the application. Also, we will be asking for approval of our proposed committee that is also attached (Cindy Adams – City of Eden Marketing & Special Events, Deanna Hunt – City of Eden City Clerk, Tra Wyatt – Commercial Bee Keeper, Frank Wyatt – Commercial Bee Keeper and Karon Tucker – Garden Club Representative). Below is a list of benefits for our community: ensure survival of vital animal species; build community locally and nationally; improve local food production; heighten awareness of biological diversity; address pest problems with fewer pesticides; access to online affiliate portal; access to training opportunities; support from pollinator conservation experts; recognition of conservation work, and custom logo and street sign artwork.

Mayor Hall called on Ms. Adams.

Ms. Adams said when people heard the word bee, they often thought of a single bee species, the European honeybee. However, the U.S. was also home to just over 3,600 native wild bee species. Native pollinators were particularly important because they had evolved alongside native plants and in many cases were the most effective pollinators if not the only pollinator. These pollinators assisted in plant reproduction and supported other species of wildlife. Pollinators touched lives every day. They were responsible for approximately one-third of the food and drink everyone consumed. Research had shown significant declines in native pollinator population sizes and ranges globally. In fact, up to 40 percent of pollinator species on Earth may be at risk of extinction in the coming years as a result of habitat loss, pesticide use, and climate change. Thinking globally and acting locally, Bee City USA provided a framework for communities to work together to conserve native pollinators. Some benefits of being an affiliate were ensuring survival of vital animal species, building community locally and nationally, improving local food production, and heightening awareness. The City had access to online affiliate portals, access to training opportunities, support from pollinator conservation experts, recognition of the City's conservation work, a custom logo, and street sign artwork. There were several application steps in the process. The first was to form a committee, which would consist of City Clerk Deanna Hunt, Karon Tucker, who would be the City's garden club representative, commercial beekeeper with WGB Farm Tra Wyatt, his wife Leslie Wyatt who owned The Hive in Uptown Eden, local beekeeper Frank Wyatt, and herself. The Wyatts worked through a company to infuse their honey into a beverage called Mead, so they were already doing some things locally. Later on, more people might be added to the committee who had an interest in the program. The City had to assign a local governing body, which would be the City of Eden, and assign it to a department, which would be assigned to the office of Marketing and Special Events. Staff would be completing the standard application, which consisted mainly of information about who the City was, who its leaders were, etc. It also needed to complete the resolution, which she hoped would be approved by Council at the present meeting. Afterwards, the City would need to pay the application fee of \$200. Staff was very excited about the program, especially Tra Wyatt who already had a long list of things that he would love to see the City do once it became a Bee City USA. She felt the City would be in good hands because the committee members were vested in the concept. It was a serious problem and this was one little thing the City could do as a community to help in that effort. Therefore, she asked for Council's approval of the resolution so it could be included in the packet and submitted to Bee City USA in the hopes of becoming an affiliate.

Council Member Ellis said it was outstanding. There were a lot of beehives in the Draper section.

A motion was made by Council Member Ellis to adopt a resolution to declare Eden as a Bee City USA. Council Member Underwood seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried, 7-0.

RESOLUTION DESIGNATING EDEN AS A BEE CITY USA® AFFILIATE

WHEREAS, the mission of BEE CITY USA is to galvanize communities to sustain pollinators, responsible for the reproduction of almost 90% of the world's flowering plant species, by providing them with healthy habitat, rich in a variety of native plants and free to nearly free of pesticides; and

WHEREAS, thanks to the more than 3,600 species of native bees in the United States, along with introduced honey bees, we have very diverse dietary choices rich in fruits, nuts, and vegetables; and

WHEREAS, bees and other pollinators have experienced population declines due to a combination of habitat loss, poor nutrition, pesticides (including insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides), parasites, diseases, and climate change; and

WHEREAS, pollinator-friendly communities can benefit local and regional economies through healthier ecosystems, increased vegetable and fruit crop yields, and increased demand for pollinator-friendly plant materials from local growers; and

WHEREAS, ideal pollinator-friendly habitat (A) Is comprised of mostly native wildflowers, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees blooming in succession throughout the growing season to provide diverse and abundant nectar and pollen, since many wild pollinators prefer or depend on the native plants with which they co-adapted; (B) is free to nearly free of pesticides, as many pesticides can harm pollinators and/or their habitat; (C) comprises undisturbed spaces (leaf and brush piles, unmown fields or field margins, fallen trees and other dead wood) for nesting and overwintering; and (D) provides connectivity between habitat areas to support pollinator movement and resilience; and

WHEREAS, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a long-term approach to maintaining healthy landscapes and facilities that minimizes risks to people and the environment by: identifying and removing the causes of pest problems rather than only attacking the symptoms (the pests); employing pests' natural enemies along with cultural, mechanical, and physical controls when prevention is not enough; and using pesticides only when no other method is feasible or effective; and

WHEREAS, supporting pollinators fosters broad-based community engagement in environmental awareness and sustainability; and

NOW, THEREFORE, in order to enhance understanding among local government staff and the public about the vital role that pollinators play and what each of us can do to sustain them, the City of Eden chooses to support and encourage healthy pollinator habitat creation and enhancement, resolving as follows:

1. The Eden Marketing & Special Events Office is hereby designated as the BEE CITY USA sponsor.
2. The Manager of Marketing & Special Events is designated as the BEE CITY USA Liaison.
3. Facilitation of Eden's BEE CITY USA program is assigned to the Buzz Around Eden Committee.
4. The Buzz Around Eden Committee is authorized to and shall:
 - a. Celebration: Host at least one educational event or pollinator habitat planting or restoration each year to showcase Eden's commitment to raising awareness of pollinator conservation and expanding pollinator health and habitat.
 - b. Publicity & Information: Install and maintain at least one authorized BEE CITY USA street sign in a prominent location, and create and maintain a webpage on the City of Eden & Explore Eden websites which includes, at minimum a copy of this resolution and links to the national BEE CITY USA website; contact information for your BEE CITY USA Liaison and Committee; reports of the pollinator-friendly activities the community has accomplished the previous year(s); and your recommended native plant species list and integrated pest management plan (explained below).
 - c. Habitat: Develop and implement a program to create or expand pollinator-friendly habitat on public and private land, which includes, but is not limited to, Identifying and inventorying Eden's real property that can be enhanced with pollinator-friendly plantings; creating a recommended locally native plant list to include wildflowers, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees and a list of local suppliers for those species; and, tracking (by square footage and/or acreage) annual area of pollinator habitat created or enhanced.

- d. Renewal: After completing the first calendar year as a BEE CITY USA affiliate, each February, apply for renewal of the City of Eden's BEE CITY USA designation following the format provided by BEE CITY USA, including a report of the previous year's BEE CITY USA activities, and paying the renewal fee based on the City of Eden's population.

ADOPTED by the Eden City Council of the City of Eden, North Carolina, this 19th day of April 2022.

By: Neville Hall, Mayor

Attest: Deanna Hunt, City Clerk

- c. Consideration of the purchase of Draper Elementary School from Rockingham County Schools.

Ms. Gilley wrote in a memo: Attached you will find a Resolution authorizing the City's acceptance of the former Draper School property from the Rockingham County School Board. The proposed Agreement would include the School Board's conveyance to the City of the entire property for \$1.00 for so long as the property is used for public purposes. The City would then lease back to the School Board the flat roofed newer facility on the property for \$1.00 per year for its Head Start program. The City would agree to maintain all facilities. The term of this lease would be 30 years with the option to renew. In addition, the Resolution authorizes the City to designate a use and enter into a Lease with the Boys and Girls Club of Eden (BGCE) for a portion of the older facility (the original school). This Lease Agreement would be for an afterschool program for children and would automatically renew annually, at the discretion of the BGCE. BGCE would be responsible for all operations and licensing of the program. The Staff recommends that you adopt this resolution authorizing Staff to complete the multiple steps included in this property transfer. The Staff believes that this project is in the best interests of the citizens, as it will promote the City's recreational programs and facilities. The City owns and operates Mill Avenue and the Draper Pool which are located directly adjacent to this property. In addition, the City is maintaining a walking track on the property itself. In addition, the former school property can be used for business development and workforce development. Finally, this property conveyance is also a means to preserve a historic and important facility in the community.

Mayor Hall called on Ms. Gilley.

Ms. Gilley said she had a proposal that staff had been preparing for some time. It had been a collaborative effort with the school board superintendent and the City to come to an agreement on the potential disposition of the former Draper Elementary School property. She said she was filling in for Director of Planning & Community Development Kelly Stultz, who sent her apologies for not being present, but she was dealing with a sick family member. The project had been of great importance to Ms. Stultz. The Draper school property had several components, one being the original building, also referred to as the older building, and the other component being the newer building, also referred to as the 1950s structure with the flat roof. In 2017, the decision was made to close Draper Elementary School, leaving the original building vacant while the 1950s flat roofed building was still being utilized by the school system for its Head Start Program. The City had negotiated with the school board and superintendent. Staff had also spoken about it in closed session with Council. She apologized that the information was not sent out along with the agenda packet, but stated it was due to some of the terms in the agreement being questioned by some members of the school board and superintendent and a result, staff was unsure as to how that discussion would go. Following staff's discussion with school personnel a few hours prior to the meeting, she had an agreement that staff believed the school board was willing to agree to. The school board would convey the entire property to the City for \$1.00 as long as the property was used for public purposes, which she felt would answer some of the questions about the City's intent with the property. It would have to be for public purposes rather than a resale for private gain. The City would then lease back to the school board the 1950s flat roofed building for \$1.00 per year for its continued use as the Head Start program. The term of that lease would be for 30 years with the option to renew. As discussed earlier with Council, there was going to be some consideration for that lease but at the present time, that was not what would be agreeable to the school board. The City would maintain all of the facilities but it would however gain the ability to use the media center and cafeteria in the 1950s flat roofed building. In addition, the City would also designate a use for the older facility, which she knew had been important to Council to actually have a use for the building before the City committed to purchase it. The use for the older facility would be to enter into a lease with the Boys and Girls Club of Eden for an afterschool program for

children. The lease would automatically renew annually at the discretion of the Boys and Girls Club of Eden; they would be responsible for all operations and licensing of the program. Staff had a resolution for Council that would authorize the final execution of the deed and the leases. The main objective of the City in the agreement would be to promote and improve the City's recreational programs and facilities. The City owned and operated Mill Avenue Recreation Center and the Draper pool, which were located directly adjacent to the former Draper Elementary School property. The City also maintained a walking track, which was actually on the Draper Elementary School property itself. The property acquisition would enhance the City's recreational facilities. In addition, the former school would be used for youth development with the Boys and Girls Club, workforce development, and potentially a business incubator site that would be hosted in the original building as well. The Boys and Girls Club lease would just be for a portion, roughly half, of the original facility. Finally, the agreement would seek to preserve a historic and important facility in the community by giving it new life. Staff believed these were terms that the school system would agree to at the present time. She understood the terms were not exactly the same that they had discussed earlier due to consideration for the lease and some maintenance issues, but staff believed that it was in the best interest of the citizens and therefore, recommended Council adopt the resolution that would authorize staff to accept the conveyance of the property for so long as the property was used for public purposes, to enter into a lease with the school board for the new building, designate a use for the original building, and to enter into a lease with the Boys and Girls Club for a portion of the older facility.

Council Member Ellis said it was not exactly the way they had discussed it in the past because the thought had been that the newer building would be bringing in property money. He asked Mr. Mendenhall if that was correct.

Mr. Mendenhall said yes. The original terms that staff thought there was an agreement with up until the previous Tuesday was \$1,000 a year.

Council Member Ellis said the City had been working on the property issue for almost four years with the school superintendent following the closing of the school. However, some of that had changed within the last few hours but the real importance was that the last property tax increase took place in 2008. What was important for the City was providing more space for activities, such as a bigger area for the senior citizens to have their taxes filed. While it was something the City did not expect to have to take on, it had been positive with everything it had done in the past 14 to 16 years, including the Mega Park on Berry Hill Road and other properties. While he was not a planner, he wanted it done for the City. He would be proud to say the City took on the responsibility of the property for the recreation department and the City's future. There was no land in Eden that the City was going to take over; it was much simpler to use existing buildings. Having a facility that the City owned where training and testing could be conducted versus having to do so behind the old mall or having to construct a new building would be more beneficial. The City had maintained a walking track for the past 30 to 40 years on the property that did not even belong to the City. He understood that it would only cost \$1.00 and felt that the City had a good manager who would overlook it; if Mr. Mendenhall thought the City should proceed with purchasing the property, he did not think the Council should backslide and not accept it. He felt there were some on Council who did not want to obtain the property, but he hoped the four members who were previously in favor of it still were.

Council Member Underwood asked Mr. Mendenhall what he recommended and how he felt about it.

Mr. Mendenhall said he recommended that Council strongly consider the proposal.

Council Member Underwood asked Mr. Mendenhall if it was doable as far as the upkeep of the buildings and what was being asked for in the agreement.

Mr. Mendenhall said yes. Beforehand, staff thought the City would have a lease rate and maintenance responsibility for everything but what the school would occupy. However, after talking with school system

representatives and from what staff understood, those were the two sticking points that the Board of Education had according to the superintendent. Looking at it, the City was treating the Boys and Girls Club as a nonprofit and they were not responsible for the maintenance or upkeep of their section of the original building. For all intents and purposes, the school board was also a nonprofit and the City was treating them differently, which was mentioned to City staff. Thinking long term, there were a couple of building components that the City would have to deal with at some point, likely in the next 10 years. The first was the roof on the flat top building because it would have to be replaced within the next 10 years considering it was at least 16 years old as best they could figure. The other component was the boiler. It would have to be inspected each year and eventually, it might have to be replaced as well. The HVAC was not necessarily an issue because the building consisted of all window units; their replacement value did not go on a capitalized program considering the replacement amount on one unit at a time was small. Everything else in the facility was very minor. The number of bathrooms was minor. Mr. Mendenhall's understanding from the school superintendent was there was a set of bathrooms on the long hallway, known as a ganged bathroom of boys and girls with multiple toilets and stalls in each one, as well as some staff bathrooms; it was still not a large number of plumbing fixtures. Staff also asked about environmental and whether there were underground storage tanks (USTs) or anything on the site. All of that had been cleared and looked good. It basically came down to a roof and a boiler that the City would have to look after and \$999 less than what the City would make that made the agreement different from what the City had originally bargained for.

Council Member Hunnicutt addressed the public concerns by stating that the City had no intentions of acquiring the property and flipping it to anyone for apartments. He felt it was important that the public understand the City's only conversation had been specific to trying to work out an agreement between the City, the County, and the Boys and Girls Club, as well as have some internal use for some space. He wanted to make the public aware that there was no need to be concerned that there was something going on behind the scenes in terms of the use because that was not the case. There were a couple of things in the resolution that concerned him. While he felt there was an opportunity for the City in acquiring the property, he had some concerns because the City's history with purchasing those kinds of buildings had not been good. He said some years ago the City purchased Leaksville Graded School and only a fraction of that building existed today as the Bridge Street Recreation Center. As far as he knew, not one part of the original Spray Graded School on Morgan Road still existed. The City had some history of not being able to follow through like it had intended to at the time in spite of good intentions. Nevertheless, he thought there were some opportunities for the City and particularly, the Boys and Girls Club. He said the resolution did not include any kind of capital budget. He asked Mr. Mendenhall if there was not a plan. He understood that a roof replacement might be forthcoming but he thought the City needed to have some better understanding as to when those expenditures would occur. One thing he felt was a surprise to several on Council was that the resolution stated the City would be leasing back to the County for \$1 while also making all the capital improvements needed for the facility. He did not understand why the City would agree to such. If the school system was going to be occupying and leasing the building for 30 years, he questioned why the City would even want the building and what benefit the City would gain from it. He said he was not trying to undermine the proposal but it was his understanding that the County lease accounted for them being responsible for all of their capital improvements and maintenance. The resolution also did not address utilities for the County. He asked if the City was agreeing to pay for electricity.

Ms. Gilley said it would be included in the lease agreement that the tenants would pay for the utilities.

Council Member Ellis asked if utilities and expenditures were included for the building.

Ms. Gilley said both tenants, the Boys and Girls Club of Eden and the school system, would pay their own utilities.

In terms of the environmental information, Council Member Hunnicutt asked if staff had copies of the reports. He asked if there had been a Phase 1 or if there were any USTs.

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Mr. Mendenhall said they asked the question of if there were USTs and they were told that there were not.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked if there were ever any tanks located there.

Mr. Mendenhall said no. The environmental on the asbestos and lead was in the possession of the school system but the City's building inspector had a copy of the asbestos report.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked if it showed that the asbestos had either been removed or encapsulated.

Mr. Mendenhall said that was correct. As best he understood, there was asbestos insulation in some piping in the original building and there was some 9x9 tile that had been tiled over with 12x12 in the 1950s newer building.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked about lead paint.

Mr. Mendenhall said the lead paint was abated in the 1950s building.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked if the electrical and plumbing inspections of the building were done by City staff.

Mr. Mendenhall said yes.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked if everything was in compliance and if there were no anticipated major capital expenditures.

Mr. Mendenhall said there was a plan that staff had shared in the past that talked about some capital expenditure on the roof of the original building, some electrical and plumbing upgrades in the original building, and most importantly, some HVAC upgrades with putting in mini-split units that would each possibly serve four rooms. There was a budget for such and as staff had previously shared, the City would use federal funds, CDBG-COVID dollars, that remained unspent. Staff had talked with the Department of Commerce about reallocating those funds so that no taxpayer funds would be used for the upkeep and maintenance of the buildings.

Council Member Ellis said that was excellent.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked if there was an actual business plan, at least verbally, as to what the City would be doing with any portion of the buildings for its own use. He questioned what kind of annual expenditures was the City facing for it to maintain its portion of the buildings. He also asked if the City would be hiring additional staff to unlock the doors each day, etc.

Mr. Mendenhall said staff had walked through in a very informal manner of what the business plan would be and it appeared there could possibly be four or five uses for the property, some of which would occur simultaneously, while some would occur in conjunction with others. The first use in the original building would be the Boys and Girls Club. The easiest way to address their access, use, and need for cleanliness was in the lease document. They would have their own set of keys and would keep their own operations up, which he thought was reflective in the resolution. The second use would be for general public use. There was some idea in the plan that had been presented that the City look at a community meeting space, a Draper neighborhood museum/archive room; however, those spaces would have to be managed and thus, staff would have to figure out how to manage those and when they would be open to the public. The third use would be a parks and recreation type use for the gymnasium, such as indoor pickleball or a community theater, which would be separate and apart from the Boys and Girls Club and the public use. The fourth use would be for the business incubator and its sub-uses would create a fifth use depending on the leases of that facility. There may be multiple tenants with multiple tenant agreements and use patterns. They might all have different keys or may

be a key code to use for entry. The City would have to maintain the janitorial component on the public space, the parks and recreation space, and potentially the business incubator. Staff had not gotten far enough down the road to the business incubator use to fully understand how that would work. The school system would be sole leasee on the 1950s building and would be responsible for maintaining the janitorial on the inside and they would have access to the building in that regard. However, under the current terms, the City would be responsible for maintenance on the inside in the happenstance there was a plumbing issue, etc. Before the recent agreement changes, the thought was that there was no need for additional staff and while there still might not be, the question regarding whether or not the 1950s building would require more maintenance support was not discussed at the meeting earlier in the afternoon. However, Mr. Mendenhall said he did not think there would be a need for additional support because the City did not currently have anyone on staff that performed boiler or roof work; rather, that would be subcontracted out. If something damaged the roof, the City would claim it on insurance and contract it out, which was what the City did anyways at all of its facilities.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked if the boiler was in the County building or the City building.

Mr. Mendenhall said the boiler was located in the 1950s school building.

Council Member Ellis said he was not sure but he thought the boiler was put in right before the school closed in 2017, likely between 2010 and 2015.

Council Member Hunnicutt said it was still very much a concern to him that the County was currently maintaining the building but they were now asking the City to do it with no benefit to the City. He could see and understand the City taking ownership if the County was going to assume their maintenance, the roof, and the boilers, aside from the mowing. He was still struggling with knowing that there were going to be capital expenditures associated with it and the City was getting nothing from it.

Mr. Mendenhall said staff felt the same way earlier in the afternoon as it was a surprise to them that it was a concern at the last minute, but they respected such. The school system had a different point of view and staff acknowledged that. It was told to him that the City was getting the investment of the property, its current property value, and the nominal control of the property. Part of the selling point to the elected members of the school board was that they no longer had the maintenance responsibility or cost and that was their reason for being able to sell it for \$1.00.

Ms. Gilley said from a negotiation standpoint, the school board could sell it for what it was worth and they could get the money for it without giving the property to the City. The benefit to the City was that it would be getting the property for \$1 instead of the County getting the profit from selling it for what it was worth. Thus, the County was having to give a little in the agreement.

Council Member Ellis said he thought there may also be a lot of grants that the City had not seen considering the previous discussion held regarding the Bee City USA program. In regards to Council Member Hunnicutt's comments regarding some of the City's past purchases of schools, some of those were in the 1970s and were torn down, such as Burton Grove Elementary School and Spray Graded School. He did not think that over the past five years where the properties had been maintained that the possibility of purchasing the property was not on the table for the City to maintain and now the County had offered it to the City for \$1.00. The City bought its pool from the YMCA for \$1.00 and it had been functional for the past 25 years. With the current proposal, the City would also be obtaining the property from Stadium Drive to Mill Avenue that did not belong to the City, possibly creating new fields that could be used for recreation purposes. A gymnasium would be included that was already built with goal posts in it and bathroom facilities on the bottom, allowing for possible weekend tournaments of youth sports. The City could possibly bring back its recreation considering the City was striving to heighten its recreation program. Freedom Park had begun to fill up its fields but the Draper property had small ball fields and basketball courts that were already set up, along with walkways and lighting clearances that were able to be walked through at night time. The baseball fields could also be used to

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accommodate travel ball teams. He did not think the changes requested were something the City could not overcome. Everything the City had done for the past 14 years since he had been a member of the Council had been positive and he did not think that the money request should stop the City at this point.

Council Member Underwood said he felt like it was well worth it for the City's behalf to proceed with the purchase because he saw a lot of great potential in doing so.

Council Member Nooe asked what the appraised value of the piece of property was.

Mr. Mendenhall said he believed it was approximately \$1.4 million for all three buildings.

Mayor Hall said it was a nonprofit and they did not pay taxes; thus, they did not care what it appraised for. They would not contest its value even if it was \$10 million because it was not a reflection of its market value in any means.

Council Member Moore asked how long the lease would be for the Boys and Girls Club if they were going to be paying part of the utilities.

Ms. Gilley said the renewal of the lease would be at the discretion of the Boys and Girls Club as to whether or not they wished to renew annually.

Council Member Moore asked what would happen if they decided it was not beneficial or costing them too much after six months.

Ms. Gilley said it was an annual lease so it would go one year and then they could choose not to renew with a 30-days' notice.

Council Member Moore said the only big concern he had with the purchase was the utilities and how much it would cost each month, particularly the heat. He had went to school there and loved the building, but he questioned the cost to do that.

Ms. Gilley said the City had priced putting mini splits and it would be done gradually, starting with the rooms that were going to be used first. One mini split would service four rooms, which was cheaper than replacing the entire boiler. The mini splits gave the City the ability to heat and cool the building gradually.

Council Member Moore asked if there was an estimate as to how much it would cost to put a new roof on the building. He recalled a previous discussion where \$350,000 was mentioned but asked if anyone had looked at and given an actual estimate.

Mr. Mendenhall said the City received a fairly hard estimate that was substantially lower than the \$300,000. It was now believed that everything could be done in the original building for \$300,000 to \$350,000.

Council Member Moore asked if that was just on the old building.

Mr. Mendenhall said yes.

Ms. Gilley said that cost included the mini splits as well, not just the roof replacement.

Council Member Epps said the roof replacement could be worked out of the budget down the road if it did not need to be replaced before another 10 years.

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Mr. Mendenhall said that was correct. The school superintendent gave the City the estimate of 10 more years because he did not recall it being replaced during his tenure with the school system. It did have some age on it and would need to be replaced in the next 10 years.

Mayor Hall said that was the flat roof but the other one needed to be replaced immediately.

Mr. Mendenhall agreed.

Council Member Nooe said the biggest issue he had was that the City was obligating itself for 30 years for \$1.00 annually and it would be responsible for maintenance inside and out. If the City did any improvements to the rest of the property and decided it was not working and walked away, it would lose all of its investment. He said he would assume to just buy it outright if the City was truly serious about wanting to be in control of it. The City could then do whatever it wanted to with it instead of being obligated to someone else for 30 years, restricting what the City could do with it.

Council Member Epps said considering the building had roughly 10 more years on the roof, the City could work slowly on the repairs. It would not have to fix everything all at one time.

Council Member Moore said he thought the roof would need to be done all at one time.

Ms. Gilley said the roof on the original building would.

Council Member Ellis read an excerpt from the resolution that stated "WHEREAS, the terms of the Property conveyance between the City and the School Board are as follows: (1) The City of Eden shall accept the Property conveyance from the School Board for the purchase price of a \$1.00 for so long as the Property is used for the benefit of the public." He questioned if that meant that the City would have the property for themselves instead of having to buy it from the school system considering they would be giving it to the City.

Ms. Gilley said that was correct because it was a nominal amount.

Council Member Nooe said the City would be obligated to the other people leasing the property to at least maintain the property.

Council Member Ellis questioned where it stated such.

Ms. Gilley said it was located in number two of the resolution.

Council Member Ellis said that in number one it stated "\$1.00 for so long as the Property is used for the benefit of the public."

Council Member Nooe said the City would be obligated to maintain a piece of property that someone else was leasing from the City for \$1.00 dollar a year for 30 years.

Mayor Hall said, as a point of reference for the public to know, when the Council went into closed session to discuss purchases of real estate, it was largely because they did not want to discuss what the City was interested in buying as it could put the Council in a negative position. They were not even allowed to vote in closed session; rather, they were only allowed to discuss the items and voice who was interested in proceeding or not proceeding. For the comfort of everyone who was in favor of the purchase, he stated that in general, Council was very much in favor of trying to make the deal work. The last time that Council had closed session, they asked City staff to go to the school board and negotiate the best deal they could for the City to see if it would make sense for the City to proceed. He acknowledged a concern that he and several others had was the maintenance of the new building. Currently, the school system was paying for the maintenance on the building

with funds they received from the state and the federal government to operate their business, including the maintenance of their facility. The City was being asked to take that expense on but it would not be receiving those funds from the state and federal government that allowed them to maintain their building. He had a concern about that and not finding out about it until he got to the present meeting bothered him. The City had not gone back and negotiated and he was unsure as a fiduciary for the City's money, that it had received the best it could from the school system. He did not think there was a lot of people wanting to purchase the property. He liked Council Member Nooe's idea of if the City wanted to buy it, it needed to buy it. He suggested possibly having the first right of refusal and if the City made an offer that the school system accepted, that would be good. However, if someone else offered higher, the City would have the first right to buy it for that price. The City was interested in preserving the property but it was not interested in blowing everyone's money on something that it could not support financially.

A motion was made by Council Member Kirkman to table the purchase of Draper Elementary School from Rockingham County Schools until the City could gather more information in order to negotiate it further.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked if he could amend Council Member Kirkman's motion to ask City staff to contact the County to try to negotiate the purchase price.

Council Member Kirkman said that was part of the negotiation component in the motion he made.

Mayor Hall said Council Member Kirkman's motion was to table the purchase until the City was able to negotiate the purchase further. It was not fair to negotiate it the afternoon of the Council meeting and he understood it was not just that day as it had been going on for months, years even. However, the changes were brought to the City that present day as the school board's offer.

Council Member Nooe seconded Council Member Kirkman's motion to table the purchase of Draper Elementary School from Rockingham County Schools until the City could gather more information in order to negotiate it further.

Council Member Ellis asked Mr. Mendenhall if the school system and County Attorney were done with everything at the end of the meeting held earlier that day.

Mr. Mendenhall said the superintendent was the only one present for the negotiations. As far as he knew, that was their best offer but he thought they would entertain whatever Council instructed staff to come back with. It was a very fluid situation and it had been for some time.

Mayor Hall said he would like to be part of the negotiations when and if it happened again.

Council Members Moore, Nooe, Kirkman, and Hunnicutt voted in favor of the motion. Council Members Underwood, Ellis, and Epps voted in opposition. The motion carried, 4-3.

Mayor Hall said the item would be tabled and revisited once they received more information. He thanked Ms. Gilley, Mr. Mendenhall, and staff for their work on the item.

d. Consideration to adopt the Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan.

Ms. Stultz wrote in a memo: At the July 16, 2019, City Council meeting, the Council endorsed the application for funding from the North Carolina Department of Transportation for a comprehensive pedestrian plan. The City received the grant and proceeded to work with the Department of Transportation and the consultant, AECOM, approved by them to develop the plan. Due to the pandemic, the project was not able to proceed until 2021. The consultant met on numerous occasions with the Steering Committee to review and gather data for the Plan. Two public meetings were advertised and held to get input from citizens. Please review and adopt the Comprehensive Plan submitted to you. The adoption of this Plan will assist the City in obtaining future grants for pedestrian improvements.

Mayor Hall called on GIS Specialist Debra Madison.

Ms. Madison said in 2019, Council authorized staff to apply for a grant to North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) for a Pedestrian Plan to rewrite the one that the City previously had. As with most things, if one was applying for grant funds or trying to do anything with DOT, they would not get very far if they did not have a plan for the future of what they wanted to develop. As a result, the City received a grant from NCDOT who employed AECOM to work as a consultant with the City to develop the plan. Mr. Todd McAulliffe from AECOM was present to make a presentation to Council.

Mr. McAulliffe said he worked for AECOM as a transportation planner and they were awarded the project through NCDOT; therefore, their clients were both NCDOT and the City. The plan was intended to update the previous Pedestrian Plan. It was an NCDOT grant with matching funds from the City. It was a collaborative effort between a steering committee, NCDOT as a project consultant, and the public. The purpose was to evaluate existing pedestrian conditions and provide infrastructure and programmatic recommendations to improve the safety, connectivity, and wellbeing of the City. As part of the planning process, the groups developed a community vision that informed the plan and guided them in their planning process. They also developed a series of goals to guide the plan, which were intended to ensure that the product delivered represented the City. To begin with, they conducted an existing condition analysis by performing a demographic analysis that looked at the land use and development of the city while also reviewing existing plans and projects, community features, the existing sidewalk network, and trail network in the city. That set the basis for how they formulated the projects and prioritized the policies and projects in the plan. The projects they developed were identified via the steering committee and then further developed through a series of steering committee meetings and public input in which five high-priority projects were identified that were meant to prioritize which projects the City felt strongly about and could be more easily implemented. They also identified policies and improvements to the ordinances and programs in order to make the city more pedestrian-friendly. The proposed network that they developed was designed to (1) connect the community features that they identified; (2) link schools, parks, and recreation facilities; (3) propose projects that were dispersed throughout the city in the Leaksville, Spray, and Draper communities; and (4) close the gaps in the pedestrian network. He showed a picture of the project map, which consisted of all the proposed projects in the city such as linear projects, which were mostly sidewalks, and spot improvements that were recommended intersection improvements such as crosswalks, stoplights, or pedestrian lights. The five high-priority projects that were identified were (1) Washington Street corridor improvements; (2) Draper connector corridor; (3) Arbor Lane shopping district corridor; (4) Aiken Road corridor; and (5) Stadium Drive corridor. The first priority project was to extend sidewalks from the Matrimony Creek Greenway to Forbes Street, close the small gap in the sidewalk between Elm and Cedar Streets, and then conduct some crossing improvements at Hamilton Street. The Draper connector would extend sidewalks from where they currently ended at Draper Christian Church to E. Meadow Road. It would also include pedestrian crossing accommodations at N. Edgewood Road and E. Meadow Road. As part of the Arbor Lane shopping district corridor, they recommended constructing sidewalks on both sides of Arbor Lane, which was in the vicinity of Walmart, and also pedestrian crossing signals at Walmart so that some of the apartment dwellers could gain access more easily across the street. It would also include sidewalk and pedestrian signals at Van Buren Road. The Aiken Road corridor improvements included constructing sidewalks from Smith River, heading east and across Van Buren Road. It also encompassed crosswalks and pedestrian signals at N. Van Buren Road and Aiken Road. Lastly, Stadium Drive improvements would include sidewalks on the north side of Stadium Drive from Meadow Road to Pierce Street, which would connect to the sidewalks that were to be constructed on E. Stadium Drive. The cost estimates were developed using an NCDOT-based tool and were based on the concept. As the project moved forward into design, the costs would become clearer. Even though there were five high-priority projects listed, he mentioned there were a number of other projects that were going to be recommended. He showed a list of sidewalk recommendations that would be included, known as the Sidewalk Gap Project, which consisted of parts of the existing sidewalk network where the sidewalks suddenly ended and did not connect to anything. Other projects included intersection and lighting projects, which were the spot projects he previously mentioned. There were several projects that the City could identify and move forward with but the key action

steps that they recommended were to adopt a plan and create a bicycle and pedestrian advisory committee (BPAC) that would help implement the plan while also reporting directly to Council. Afterwards, they recommended that the City strengthen partnerships with surrounding governments and institutions such as Rockingham County, RPO, and the NCDOT division. They also recommended the City amend the ordinances that they identified in the plan as needing improvement and begin to identify and apply for funding.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked if greenway improvements were part of the Pedestrian Plan.

Mr. McAulliffe answered no. He said the greenway was separate from the plan but they did make several connections to the greenways.

Council Member Hunnicutt said he thought he saw some proposed greenways on the drawing.

Ms. Madison said they proposed some sidewalks that would help connect the neighborhoods to the greenways, such as the area close to Matrimony Creek Greenway, where it did not have any sidewalks. Doing so would enable people to get from their neighborhoods safely to the greenway in order to walk.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked if new greenways or anything similar to that were part of a different plan.

Ms. Madison said yes.

Council Member Underwood asked if the City would have any financial obligations to the plan.

Ms. Madison said only to the point where the proposed projects listed would be approved for development. If so, it would be up to the City to either find grants or provide the necessary funding to complete them. As far as the plan itself, it was not obligating the City to any funding. It would all depend on if the City decided to move ahead with the proposed projects.

Mr. McAulliffe said if NCDOT came along and wanted to do something on one of the roads and the City wanted to provide a sidewalk, it would need the Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan in order to obtain necessary funding.

Ms. Madison said Ms. Stultz had received phone calls from NCDOT in the past where they had unused available funding and questioned if the City had a project already in place where it could move quickly to complete. If the City already had the projects listed in a plan, she could provide a list of projects possibly suitable for such and then obtain the funding to complete them.

Council Member Epps asked if each one of the projects would be brought before Council before they were completed.

Ms. Madison said yes. Staff would look at the projects, develop estimates, and then present them to Council before starting them.

Council Member Moore said there were grants for sidewalks; that was how the City was able to install the sidewalks along Kings Highway.

Ms. Madison said a grant was how the City was able to do the sidewalks on Stadium Drive as well. They were really close to starting the sidewalks on that street. Staff was working on final plans for the north side of Stadium Drive between Pierce Street and Edgewood Road, which should be complete this spring.

A motion was made by Council Member Hunnicutt to adopt the Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan. Council Member Ellis seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried, 7-0.

A copy of the Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan is on file in the City Clerk's Office and online at www.edennc.us.

- e. Consideration to adopt a resolution to apply for American Rescue Plan Act funding for EPA projects.

Special Projects Manager Terry Shelton wrote in a memo: We plan to apply for award of American Rescue Plan Act funding in the form of a loan and/or a grant for remaining unfinished EPA Remediation Plan projects needing funding. President Joe Biden signed the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the latest federal stimulus bill to aid public health and economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, on March 11, 2021. This funding would be used for small segments of previous EPA projects that were dropped to make our previous funding package do as much work as possible without going over the funding budget that was awarded. This would include parts of Contracts 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 that were removed or deferred until funding is available. The ARPA funding will be administered through the North Carolina Division of Water Infrastructure (DWI). Staff recommends that Council consider adopting this Resolution in order that we may apply for and receive funding from the DWI.

Mayor Hall called on Mr. Shelton.

Mr. Shelton said he was requesting adoption of a resolution to apply for some of the ARPA money, which had been in the news a lot. It was \$1.9 trillion that the federal government made available for infrastructure, public health, and economic recovery projects. The deadline to apply was May 1 and staff was currently putting the application together in hopes of being able to receive funding to use for cleaning up things that the City had to delay on the EPA work due to not having the funding available to do so at the time. There were approximately 15 projects that had been pulled out and most of those were line and manhole replacement work or lining of pipe that needed to be done. While the EPA allowed the City to delay those projects, they did expect the City to go back at some point and complete them; this particular award was an opportunity where he thought there would hopefully be a lot of grant money available if the City were to be successful in what it applied for. He asked Council to pass the resolution if it was their desire to apply for the funds. If the City did receive an award, staff would have to come back to Council for approval to accept the money and move forward with the projects, possibly three to six months from the present time.

A motion was made by Council Member Epps to adopt a resolution to apply for American Rescue Plan Act funding for EPA projects. Council Member Underwood seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried, 7-0.

RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EDEN

The Federal Clean Water Act Amendments of 1987 and the North Carolina the Water Infrastructure Act of 2005 (NCGS 159G) have authorized the making of loans and grants to aid eligible units of government in financing the cost of construction and planning of improvements of wastewater and drinking water systems, and The City of Eden has need for and intends to complete various wastewater system improvement projects in order to comply with US EPA Administrative Order CWA-04- 2012-4578 and provide wastewater system resiliency/asset hardening, and The City of Eden intends to request State loan and/or grant assistance for the projects,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EDEN:

That City of Eden, the Applicant, will arrange financing for all remaining costs of the projects including required matching funds, if approved for a State loan and/or grant award.

That the Applicant will adopt and place into effect on or before completion of the projects a schedule of fees and charges and other available funds which will provide adequate funds for proper operation, maintenance, and administration of the system and the repayment of all principal and interest on the debt.

That the governing body of the Applicant agrees to include in the loan agreement a provision authorizing the State Treasurer, upon failure of the (unit of government) to make scheduled repayment of the loan, to withhold from the (unit

of government) any State funds that would otherwise be distributed to the local government unit in an amount sufficient to pay all sums then due and payable to the State as a repayment of the loan.

That the Applicant will provide for efficient operation and maintenance of the projects on completion of construction thereof.

That Jon Mendenhall, City Manager, the Authorized Official, and successors so titled, is hereby authorized to execute and file an application on behalf of the Applicant with the State of North Carolina for a loan and/or grant to aid in the completion of the construction projects described above.

That Neville Hall, Mayor, and successors so titled, is hereby authorized and directed to furnish such information as the appropriate State agency may request in connection with such application or the projects; to make the assurances as contained above; and to execute such other documents as may be required in connection with the application.

That the Applicant has substantially complied or will substantially comply with all Federal, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, and ordinances applicable to the project and to Federal and State grants and loans pertaining thereto.

Adopted this the 19 day of April, 2022 at Eden, North Carolina.

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 be happy to answer any questions regarding the report. He also extended a thank you for the past Easter weekend event that was held at Freedom Park. Generation 4 Hope, Recreation Center Director Kathy Overby, Ms. Huffman, and Mr. Vernon did a phenomenal job that he thought was well received. The weather was nice and the kids really enjoyed the Easter egg hunt and the food.

Council Member Epps said Generation 4 Hope was one of their churches in their conference.

Mr. Mendenhall said the City really appreciated them and it was a good time had by all.

Mayor Hall said there were extra copies of the report available at the meeting and it was printed in Eden's Own Journal and available on the City's website as well.

City Manager's Report

April 2022

City Manager Jon Mendenhall

ADMINISTRATION

Division of Design & Construction

Water Main Projects Update

A two-man crew from Haymes Brothers, Inc. returned to pump out accumulated water from the bore and receiving pits north of Mill Avenue on March 7. A full crew was able to push six sections of 16-inch diameter restrained joint ductile iron water main pipe through the 30-inch diameter steel encasement pipe by lunch time on March 10. After timely delivery of a couple parts, the crew was also able to complete the tie-in on the south side of the bore late that afternoon. The crew used two 45-degree bends, two sleeves, and about 35 feet of PVC pipe during this work. The connection was made to the north end of the first joint of pipe installed (ca. July 12, 2021) for the second phase of the SOVA MegaSite WL project. It took two more weeks to hammer the rock and complete digging another bore pit, with this one located on the west side of Dry Creek and also south of the railroad right-of-way. A short section of 8-inch diameter water main

Minutes of the April 19, 2022 meeting of the City Council, City of Eden:

had to be temporarily cut and removed, with a new water valve added on both sides of the bore pit. The crew was able to start the bore under Dry Creek on March 25, and able to get two encasement sections bored by the end of the month. A Collection and Distribution crew is scheduled to start the replacement of an old 2-inch diameter galvanized water main at the south end of S. Byrd Street in early April, with the intent to have the work completed by the end of the month. Recent hydrant flow data was supplied to LKC Engineering, PLLC on March 28 for use in completing required documents for a submittal package to Public Water Supply Section, for four water main replacement projects the firm has designed.

Marketing & Special Events

Grown & Gathered

We are very excited about our Spring Grown & Gathered coming up on Thursday, May 19 at The Farmhouse. We are sold out but there is another opportunity to attend the Summer Grown & Gathered on Thursday, August 11.

Ernestine Hampton Park Dedication

We will be dedicating the newly named Ernestine Hampton Park and unveiling the new sign on Thursday, April 28 at 5:30 p.m. This is the former Peter Hill Park located at 201 Peter Hill Road.

Upcoming Events!

- Piedmont Pottery Festival – June 4 from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church
- Oink & Ale – June 18 from 6 p.m. until 9 p.m. along Monroe Street in Uptown Eden

Now Accepting Applications

We are now accepting applications for these RiverFest vendors:

- Artisan/Crafter
- Business Display
- Ice Cream – Beverage – Food
- Large Business – Vehicle Display

Contact the marketing office at 336-623-2110 or cadams@edennnc.us or get your application at www.edennnc.us.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Bridge Street & Mill Avenue Recreation Centers

These two facilities are open Monday through Thursday from 12 to 8 p.m., and on Fridays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Those attending may participate in basketball, track walking, cornhole, or the playground. The Bridge Street center offers tennis courts while Mill Avenue center offers a baseball field.

Bridge Street Recreation Center: a new cornhole league started during the month of February and is played on Thursday evenings. The senior center is hosting exercise classes at the center on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings. Meals on Wheels continues to operate out of the nutrition center each weekday.

Mill Avenue Recreation Center: pickleball is played on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings at 8 a.m.

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 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and offers paint classes, mahjongg, 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. The center has begun its tax assistance program and also provides free notary services. The Rockingham County Senior Games will begin in April. The center had special guests from UNCG, NCBAM, and Eden Drug come during the month of March that educated seniors about their health. Compassion Health Care provided free blood pressure checks, glucose screenings, and COVID tests for the seniors. They also provided free COVID test kits and other goodies. Director of Parks and Recreation Terry Vernon also came by the center to inform the seniors of the

activities taking place within the Parks and Recreation Department. The center finished its cornhole league and is now offering shuffleboard and bocce clinics. The community garden and surrounding area is being prepped for planting.

Sports

The indoor soccer league has ended. The Eden Prowlers Baseball and Softball program is in full swing with nine teams and over 110 players, ranging from ages 4 to 12.

You may register for any open sports at Bridge Street or Mill Avenue Recreation Centers, City Hall-Customer Service Office, or online at www.edennc.us

PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Boards and Commissions

The Community Appearance Commission elected officers and welcomed two new members. The commission selected Burger King, Southern Julep, and Downtown Deli for appearance awards.

The Historic Preservation Commission sent the local landmark application for Spray Cotton Mills to the State Historic Preservation Office for review.

The Tree Board discussed doing an Arbor Day program for one or more local preschools that would involve planting trees on the church/school property if possible.

Grants

Four applications were received for the CDBG-COVID grant and were approved, resulting in \$9,814 being paid towards rent, mortgage payments, and electrical bills. Three additional applications have been received and are being processed. Staff is working with the State and the City's consultant to amend the budget for the grant.

Title searches have been completed for the Draper Grant and have been forwarded to the grant consultant. The consultants have been trying to obtain documentation to verify income for the grant applicants but have only received information from approximately 60 percent of the top ten designated recipients.

Inspections and Permits

Total Inspections Performed-March:	308 (not including fire inspections)
Total Permits Issued-March	157

Staff is continuing to review construction documents for Purina as they are released. Staff is currently working with Gray Construction on the second phase of occupancy in the office areas. The new Dayspring medical facility project is progressing rapidly and staff is waiting on construction documents for the pharmacy upfit.

Downtown and Economic Development Activities

Uptown Eden

The former Corum Heating & Air Conditioning building on Bridge Street was sold and would house an MMA group.

POLICE

The department received its shipment of Axon tasers. The agency's taser instructors are developing a hands-on course to familiarize officers with its capabilities and proper use. All officers should be trained and the tasers deployed by the end of April.

Axon field technicians have installed signaling devices in the patrol vehicles. The department is now waiting on the arrival of the fleet in-car cameras to complete the project.

Civil disturbance response gear, which was funded by a 2021 GCC grant, has been ordered through Dana Safety. The gear will field 28 officers with the needed gear to safely respond to incidents of social unrest.

- b. Report on advisory committee proceedings.

(1) Strategic Planning Commission.

No report.

(2) Planning Organization Boards.

Mayor Hall called on Ms. Madison.

Ms. Madison said the Board of Adjustment had not received any applications and therefore, had not met for the last few months. The Planning Board had been acting as the steering committee for the Pedestrian Plan and the Comprehensive Plan and had been meeting lately regarding those. While the Community Appearance Commission, Historic Preservation Society, and the Tree Board had been meeting, she did not have anything to report from them. The Planning Board would be voting for a recommendation on the Comprehensive Plan at their next meeting, which would be brought before Council at the May City Council meeting. She would be sending the plan to Council the following week as it was a little over 100 pages and she wanted them to have time to review it. She said if they had any questions or preferred a paper copy, to please feel free to call her.

(3) Parks Commission.

Mayor Hall called on Mr. Vernon.

Mr. Vernon said the Parks Commission had not met but they had been busy with the baseball program. He said there were a couple games going on at the present time and four more scheduled for the following day. He invited Council to come to Freedom Park and watch the games and the kids. It made a heart feel good to see the kids and the people getting back out in the community and enjoying themselves after being stuck in the house for the last year and a half. They had a successful Easter egg hunt and Generation 4 Hope gave out summer shoes, shirts, and shorts for the kids, all for free. They also had a gospel group sing, who did a tremendous job. In addition, they gave out bicycles, scooters, hot dogs, and water for free. He estimated they had well over 1,000 people participate. The Hooked on Fishing Derby would be held April 30 at the Fireman's Hut with registration starting at 9 a.m. The fishing would begin at 9:30 a.m. and end around 11 a.m. Ms. Huffman always provided door prizes and awards for the different age groups. He asked everyone to spread the word because the participants always had a good time.

Council Member Underwood asked Mr. Vernon what the number of participants were for baseball as he had heard they were up from last year.

Mr. Vernon said they had 114 participants that registered, causing them to have to cut off some of their teams early. The City had two teams last year and that was only in t-ball. This year, they had nine teams, in various age brackets, so it had definitely picked up. Cornhole was being played every Thursday at Bridge Street Recreation Center. Pickleball was being played six days a week with over 100 people participating.

Council Member Underwood said he was hearing nothing but great things for the youth and he thanked Mr. Vernon for that.

Council Member Epps said his post-COVID therapist was excited telling him that his child was going to be playing ball at Freedom Park that night.

Mr. Vernon said they played a lot of games at Freedom Park, but they were also traveling all over the county to play. They had already been to Stokesdale, Huntsville, and Bethany.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. Approval and adoption of the (1) March 3, 2022 special meeting and (2) March 15, 2022 regular meeting minutes.
- b. Adoption of a resolution to commit financial resources to the north basin of the wastewater treatment plant.

Utilities Manager Melinda Ward wrote in a memo: In the process of applying for State funding, it is required that a statement be given by the City of Eden City Council pledging a commitment to all other funding not covered by the grant received. For your consideration, you will find the following resolution.

RESOLUTION BY GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF EDEN

WHEREAS, The Federal Clean Water Act Amendments of 1987 and the North Carolina Water Infrastructure Act of 2005 (NCGS 159G) have authorized the making of loans and grants to aid eligible units of government in financing the cost of construction and studies of wastewater treatment works, and;

WHEREAS, The City of Eden has need of and intends to perform considerable repairs and renovations to the north aeration basin and upgrades to their wastewater treatment process. The existing basin uses brush rotor aerators and solar mixers. The walls of this basin are poured on slope panels with minimal reinforcement, and have severely corroded. As a result, the sloped wall panels in several locations are beginning to break away from the original location and are sliding inward toward the basin floor. The City has been attaching cabling and anchors as a temporary means to prevent complete failure. Currently only the north aeration basin has mechanical aeration which provides biological treatment so it is critical for this treatment component to be repaired immediately. In order for the north aeration basin to be renovated, the existing brush rotors will need to be relocated to the equalization basin for temporary treatment until the construction of the north aeration basin improvements are complete, and;

WHEREAS, The City of Eden intends to request State loan and/or grant assistance for the project;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EDEN:

That the City, the Applicant, will arrange financing for all remaining costs of the project, if approved for a State loan and/or grant award.

That the Applicant will adopt and place into effect on or before completion of the project a schedule of fees and charges and other available funds which will provide adequate funds for proper operation, maintenance, and administration of the system and the repayment of all principal and interest on the debt.

That the governing body of the Applicant agrees to include in the loan agreement a provision authorizing the State Treasurer, upon failure of the City of Eden to make scheduled repayment of the loan, to withhold from the City of Eden any State funds that would otherwise be distributed to the local government unit in an amount sufficient to pay all sums then due and payable to the State as a repayment of the loan.

That the Applicant will provide for efficient operation and maintenance of the project on completion of construction thereof.

That Jon Mendenhall, City Manager, the Authorized Official, and successors so titled, is hereby authorized to execute and file an application on behalf of the Applicant with the State of North Carolina for a loan and/or grant to aid in the study of or construction of the project described above.

That the Authorized Official, and successors so titled, is hereby authorized and directed to furnish such information as the appropriate State agency may request in connection with such application or the project: to make the assurances as contained above; and to execute such other documents as may be required in connection with the application.

That the Applicant has substantially complied or will substantially comply with all Federal, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, and ordinances applicable to the project and to Federal and State grants and loans pertaining thereto.

Adopted this 19th day of April, 2022 at Eden, North Carolina.

By: Neville Hall, Mayor

Attest: Deanna Hunt, City Clerk

c. Approval and adoption of Budget Amendment #6.

Assistant Director of Finance Amy Winn wrote in a memo: The attached budget amendment appropriates funds from the PEG Channel Grant received from the State. The PEG Channel is run by the County and Rockingham Community College. The grant allows the City to support the County PEG Channel to provide citizens with governmental content and also allow for the purchase of equipment to create content for the channel.

Subject:		Budget Amendment #6			
	Account #	From	To	Amount	
General Fund Revenues					
PEG Channel Grant	10-3270-13000	\$ -	\$ 25,900.00	\$ 25,900.00	\$ 25,900.00
					<u>\$ 25,900.00</u>
General Fund Expenditures					
PEG Channel Grant Expenditures	10-4135-34500	\$ -	\$ 25,900.00	\$ 25,900.00	\$ 25,900.00
					<u>\$ 25,900.00</u>
Appropriates proceeds from a PEG Channel Grant to the appropriate expenditure line item.					
Adopted and effective this 19th day of April, 2022.					
Attest:					
_____ Deanna Hunt, City Clerk			_____ Neville Hall, Mayor		

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Hall said the Mrs. Ernestine Hampton Park dedication would be held on April 28 at Peter Hill Road at 5:30 p.m. It had been awhile since Council agreed to change the name of the park, but now that winter was over, they wanted to celebrate all the things that a wonderful woman did for the community. He welcomed everyone to attend.

Council Member Epps thanked everyone that prayed for and lifted him up during his fight with COVID that cost him 21 days in the hospital and 30 days in quarantine. He hoped they would release him tomorrow but he appreciated the prayers and support.

Mayor Hall said everyone was glad to have him back.

Council Member Kirkman said the Boulevard merchants were having a vendor’s alley event on May 7 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Council Member Hunnicutt said he wanted to follow up on the comments that were made by Ms. Price during the public comment section. He was the Council representative on the board of the Eden Downtown Development Group (EDDI). There was a lot of frustration with that group relative to the small area plan approval. The City spent a lot of money having those plans developed. Unfortunately, Council acted on it before the plan was finalized and really submitted to them. He was not present to debate the merits or disadvantages of a one-way street, but stated that Council would have several of those coming up for the Draper and Spray areas. Going forward, he thought Council needed to be careful. It was OK to ask questions but in terms of Council taking action, he suggested letting the process work through because there was always an opportunity to say no to anything. He stated that it was very demoralizing for the EDDI. There had been millions of dollars invested in the downtown Leaksville area and those merchants were frustrated and felt they were not getting any support from City Council. He wanted to share that with everyone and added that he was not promoting or arguing anything.

Mayor Hall said since the meeting where Council acted on Monroe Street, there had been another public hearing with the planner and he was personally enlightened by the things that were described to him that were possible with Monroe Street. He agreed that it was something that could possibly be revisited, but he also knew there was some loud opposition to it as well. He had personally spoken to several other merchants, including Ms. Price, and would be interested in possibly revisiting that once the plan was finalized. He was under the impression that it was not physically possible, but according to the planning group, it was; however, that was something for the merchants to decide. He did agree that there was no point in doing these plans if the Council did not let them finish and tell them what was proposed.

Council Member Hunnicutt said Council did want to support the downtown areas.

Council Member Ellis said he had not seen or heard anything from Community and Economic Manager Randy Hunt since it was brought before Council. Therefore, he could not say that he had any objections to what the Council previously decided. He felt that Council should hear more about the things that were going on instead of assuming that the City was going to include and pay for it.

Ms. Gilley said the Eden Youth Council (EYC) had a kickball tournament for the elementary kids scheduled for April 30. The EYC had been working really hard and had even hosted assemblies at Central Elementary, Leaksville-Spray Elementary, and Douglass Elementary to try and garner some participation. They would have police officers as the referees and the EYC were going to be the coaches for the elementary schools. It would be a fun day. She asked everyone to come out and support the event.

Council Member Moore asked Ms. Gilley what time the event started.

Ms. Gilley said it started at 9:30 a.m.

Mayor Hall said it was at Freedom Park and the public was welcome to watch as they would enjoy seeing it. The police officers might even enjoy it more than the elementary kids. He was glad the event was back in the plans for Eden.

CLOSED SESSION:

- a. Closed session pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11 (a)(4) Economic Development, (a)(5) Property, and (a)(6) Personnel.

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

A motion was made by Council Member Kirkman to return to open session. Council Member Underwood seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried, 7-0.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

Respectfully submitted,

Deanna Hunt
City Clerk

Minutes of the April 19, 2022 meeting of the City Council, City of Eden:

ATTEST:

Neville Hall
Mayor