

// A regular meeting of the Council of the City of Lynchburg was held on the 27th day of February, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Stephanie Reed, President, presiding. The following Members were present:

Present: Stephanie Reed, Chris Faraldi, MaryJane Dolan, Jeff Helgeson, Martin Misjuns,	
Larry Taylor, Sterling A. Wilder	7
Absent:	0

// In the matter of Budget, Council held a work session regarding the FY 2025 - 2029 Capital Improvement Program for the City and Schools. Chief Financial Officer Donna Witt provided Council with a presentation. As part of the FY 2025 Budget, the FY 2025 - 2029 Capital Improvement Program was presented to highlight City and Schools capital projects that are funded by the general fund.

Vice Mayor Faraldi asked for clarification as to whether new items in the maintenance budget referred to items that were new in the current year or items that had not yet been started. Ms. Witt said that the new items had not yet been started. She said that there may be new projects closer to 2029 because they had to be included to work with VDOT for funding. She said that there was no guaranteed VDOT funding, but they intended to apply for funding for those projects. Vice Mayor Faraldi requested additional information for a later work session regarding Nationwide Drive roundabout, Lakeside Drive improvements, Bedford Avenue bridge, and Timberlake Road westbound lanes.

Councilmember Misjuns asked what happened to the funding for projects which were removed in the current fiscal year. Ms. Witt said that those projects were to be funded with a line of credit, and they had not borrowed for some projects, so they would move the appropriations to fully fund 501/221. Councilmember Misjuns asked whether the items for appropriation through 06/30/2024 with dollar amounts were all funded through a line of credit. Ms. Witt said that they were all line of credit items. She said that the only project with bond funding at this point was the police department.

Councilmember Helgeson said that the Finance Committee recently approved a grant for tree plantings downtown. He said that if funding for the tree replacement program in Parks and Recreation was removed, the City could potentially use some of the grant funding to replace trees in some of the parks.

Councilmember Misjuns asked about the nonprofit fundraising efforts of the Fire Department. Ms. Witt said that the funds were still in a reserve account. Councilmember Misjuns asked if the Parks and Recreation foundation could raise funds from private entities to complete park projects. City Manager Mr. Wynter C. Benda stated that Council could accept a note of transfer which was earmarked for specific projects. He said that if there were private interests, staff would make sure that they understood the full requirements to complete the project. Councilmember Misjuns said that leveraging private interests could help complete projects without using tax payer money.

Vice Mayor Faraldi said that he wanted to include funding for all elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools for security improvement projects in the CIP.

Mayor Reed asked why they had to remove several projects and cut funding. Ms. Witt said that there were three main reasons: inflation, increased interest rates, and the ability to pay increased debt service. Mayor Reed asked whether they were seeing differences in revenue streams. Ms. Witt said that many of the economic-driven revenues were starting to flatten.

Councilmember Dolan stated that there was a fourth reason: lowering the Real Estate Tax rate and that subsequent lack of revenue. Ms. Witt replied that this impacts the City's ability to pay debt service.

Mayor Reed stated for the record that there seems to be an argument from some on Council that the reason the schools aren't able to be funded is due to the funding of the Riverfront Amphitheater project when in fact the same Council chose to not fully fund the schools in FY 2024.

// In the matter of Public Works and Lynchburg Police Department, Agenda Item #2, Council was briefed regarding the City and ApCo Easement (3405 Odd Fellows Road - LPD Facility). Deputy Director of Public Works Clay Simmons provided a summary of the item to Council. ApCo needs to obtain an easement across the City property located at 3405 Oddfellows Road to provide permanent power to the new police department headquarters.

// In the matter of Rezoning, Agenda Item #3, Council was briefed regarding Rezoning: I-2, Light Industrial District to B-3, Community Business District & FLUM Amendment: Resource Conservation to Community Commercial – 6201 Fort Avenue. Mayor Reed stated that the item would appear before Council for action at the March 12th, 2024 meeting. City Planner Rachel Frischeisen provided a summary of the item to Council. Watan Holdings, LLC is petitioning to rezone approximately eight hundred ninety-two thousandths (0.892) of an acre located at 6201 Fort Avenue from I-2, Light Industrial District to B-3, Community Business District and to amend the Future Land Use Map from Resource Conservation to Community Commercial to allow the use of an existing structure as a restaurant. This property has been used commercially since at least 1978 and has previously been used as a restaurant several times. Those restaurants were considered "legally nonconforming" restaurants and are not permitted in the I-2, Light Industrial District. Since the structure has been vacant for more than two (2) years, the nonconforming status has lapsed and rezoning would be required to use the property as a restaurant.

Councilmember Helgeson asked whether the cost for the developer to do the rezoning was high; he stated that this has been a restaurant for as long as he could remember and he asked specifically if the petitioner had to pay a lot of money. Ms. Frischeisen said that there was a rezoning fee and an advertisement fee. She said that the applicant was not required to submit engineering or architectural plans unless they intended to change the building. She said that the applicant had indicated they would not do any exterior changes. She said that the use had previously been a restaurant, and the original permit was issued in September 1978. She said that at the time, it was operating as a legally nonconforming use, but since the use had lapsed

for more than two years, a zoning permit was required to move the development forward. He stated that time lapsed due to governmental COVID restrictions when the restaurant had to shut down and that he hoped the petitioner didn't have to pay a lot of money to operate this as a restaurant going forward since it has historically been a restaurant.

// In the matter of Finance, Agenda Item #4, Council was briefed regarding the PPTA/PPEA Guidelines Update. Mayor Reed stated that the item would appear before Council for action at the March 12th meeting. Chief Financial Officer Donna Witt provided a summary of the item to Council. City Council adopted guidelines for implementation of both the Public-Private Transportation Act (PPTA) and Public-Private Education Facilities & Infrastructure Act (PPEA) in 2004 and then amended both in 2006. Changes to the PPTA legislation over the years have resulted in procedural differences from the PPEA. An update to the guidelines is needed.

// In the matter of Roll Call, Councilmember Wilder said that he wanted to thank those who attended the Unity Walk. He said that more unity was needed in the community. He announced that there was a Youth Conference scheduled for March 16th at 9 a.m. at the Jubilee Center. He said that they wanted to focus on positive events to reduce the negative aspects of the community.

Councilmember Helgeson said that it was sad what they were seeing in society and in the school system. He said that surveys showed students felt less and less safe as they aged through the school system. He said that a culture of permissiveness was fostered when there was no stern action. He said that not being hard on the crime was being hard on the students who were trying to learn. He said that yesterday, a student was put into a coma due to a fight at Heritage High School. He said that they had to change the culture. He said that 365 suspensions and consequences were to protect students. He said that the students were not safe, and there was a continued decline in enrollment. He said that the Council could affect change through its appointments to the School Board. He said that he hoped the School Board

would recognize that discipline was critical. He said that they should remove students who were causing disruptions from the classroom.

Councilmember Misjuns asked citizens to pray for full recovery of the student who was injured at Heritage High School.

Councilmember Taylor said that he echoed Councilmember Misjuns' comments. He said that parents should be responsible for disciplining their children. He said that if there was a father and mother in the house to discipline the children, they would grow up to be productive citizens. He said that they had to give discipline back to the parents.

Vice Mayor Faraldi said that he came from a family of teachers. He said that it pained him to hear that teachers were tasked with educating, counseling, raising, feeding, and protecting students, which was too much. He said that he echoed the previous comments, and there needed to be a comprehensive look at what needed to be done in Lynchburg regarding violent behavior in the schools. He said that it spoke to the crime in the City, and he wanted to thank the City Manager, Chief of Police, and the Commonwealth's Attorney for engaging him on items he requested to determine ways the Council could address violence.

Vice Mayor Faraldi continued by requesting staff to add an ordinance to address a citywide policy on flying flags to an upcoming meeting.

Mayor Reed said that she had a heavy heart, as it had been a rough month for the City. She said that there had been two senseless killings among other incidents that could have resulted in injury or death. She said that they often discussed taxpayers, partnerships, and parents. She said that when looking at the demographics of who the City was arresting, who was in the juvenile detention center, who was in the Fort Hill Alternative School, who was in the group home, the statistics of who would be incarcerated, and the statistics of who was in foster care, it was evident that the City had a desperate need for strong, positive, male mentorship. She said that many homes did not have two strong parents, and there was a large number of young men who were not having their needs met to have the direction to make good choices.

She said that she wanted to see a partnership in their community of men who wanted to be mentors. She said that if men in the community did not get involved, the statistics would not change. She said that she wanted the churches to partner with the City, since there was one on every corner. She said that there were several retirees in the community. She said she wanted to see the City meet the needs of the children. She said that if the children did not receive direction, they would continue to make choices that led to others becoming victims. She said that last week, a 19-year-old woman was murdered because of the choices of a young man. She said that another young man was in a coma because of similar choices.

// On the motion of Councilmember Helgeson, seconded by Councilmember Misjuns, Council elected, by the following recorded vote, to enter into closed session to discuss the investment of public funds in relation to a project with a private party, where competition or bargaining will be involved, where if made public initially, the financial interest of the City would be adversely affected, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)(6) of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended; to discuss the performance of specific membership of the City's Youth Services Advisory Board and the Lynchburg Youth Services, Inc., in relation to the operations of the City, and to receive legal advice regarding the same, pursuant to Sections 2.2-3711(A)(1) and 2.2-3711(A)(8) of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended; to discuss probable litigation being brought by the City in relation to a development project within the corporate limits of the City and to receive legal advice regarding the same, pursuant to Sections 2.2-3711(A)(7) and 2.2-3711(A)(8) of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended; and to discuss appointments for vacancies to the following Boards and Commissions: MLK/Lynchburg Community Council, Greater Lynchburg Transit Company Board of Directors, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended.

With no further discussion from the Council, the following vote was recorded:

Ayes: Reed, Faraldi, Dolan, Helgeson, Misjuns, Taylor, Wilder

Noes:

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// The meeting was reopened to the public.

// Councilmember Helgeson made the following motion:

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Lynchburg has convened a closed meeting on this date, pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2 3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by City Council that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Lynchburg certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by Council.

The motion was seconded by Councilmember Wilder, and Council, by the following recorded vote, adopted the motion:

Ayes: Reed, Faraldi, Dolan, Helgeson, Taylor, Wilder

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Noes: Misjuns

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// There were no appointments made for either the MLK/Lynchburg Community Council or the Greater Lynchburg Transit Company Board of Directors.

// The meeting recessed at 5:59 p.m.

// A regular meeting of the Council of the City of Lynchburg was held on the 27th day of February, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Stephanie Reed, President, presiding. The following Members were present:

Present: Stephanie Reed, Chris Faraldi, MaryJane Dolan, Jeff Helgeson, Martin Misjuns,
Larry Taylor, Sterling A. Wilder

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Absent:

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// Councilmember Helgeson led the invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

// In the matter of Recognitions, Agenda Item #1, Mayor Reed recognized the Liberty Christian Academy Varsity Co-Cheer team. She said that the team placed 9th in the game-day division and 4th in the co-ed division of Universal Cheerleaders Association (UCA) National High School Cheer Championships held at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex in Orlando Florida. She said they were the only team from Virginia to advance to the final round. She said that the team was coached by Coach Susan Hunter, Assistant Coach Morgan Preston and Assistant Coach Morgan Andrews.

// In the matter of Recognitions, Agenda Item #2, Mayor Reed recognized the Lynchburg Fire Department for receiving the Governor's Award for Excellence in Community Risk Reduction. She said the department received the award due to its collaborative efforts with the Fire Marshall's Office and the University of Lynchburg Bonner Program. Fire Chief Wormser said that he had accepted the award on behalf of the City. He said that the award was a testament to the dedication, professionalism, and passion of each member of the Fire Department. He said that the Walkabout Program had resulted in more than 168 smoke alarms installed, 50 smoke alarm batteries changed, and countless conversations which connected citizens to community resources.

// In the matter of the Consent Agenda, Agenda Item #3, Councilmember Misjuns requested to pull the November 28th, 2023 minutes to address some typographical errors; there was a consensus from Council.

// In the matter of the Consent Agenda, Agenda Item #4, copies of the minutes of the January 23, 2024 meeting have been previously furnished to Council, and on motion of Councilmember Dolan, seconded by Councilmember Wilder, Council by the following recorded vote approved the minutes as presented:

Ayes: Wilder, Dolan, Helgeson, Reed, Faraldi, Taylor, Misjuns

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Noes: 0

// In the matter of the Consent Agenda, Agenda Item #5, copies of the minutes of the February 13, 2024 meeting have been previously furnished to Council, and on motion of Councilmember Dolan, seconded by Councilmember Wilder, Council by the following recorded vote approved the minutes as presented:

Ayes: Reed, Faraldi, Dolan Helgeson, Misjuns, Taylor, Wilder

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Noes: 0

// In the matter of CASA of Central Virginia, Agenda Item #6, Council held a public hearing in consideration of adopting a resolution authorizing the letting of property at the Monument Terrace Building and to approve a lease agreement between CASA of Central Virginia, Inc. and the City of Lynchburg. Director of Public Works Gaynelle Hart provided a summary of the request. Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Central Virginia and the City of Lynchburg have an existing agreement to lease office space at 901 Church Street. CASA currently occupies 3,218 square feet of space for its offices on the first floor. At the time the lease was first approved in October 2012, CASA agreed to pay for \$20,000 of improvements to the space and the City agreed to waive rent payments in lieu of a \$12,000 annual contribution to CASA. When the original 2012 lease was approved for a five-year term, it contemplated the option for two additional five-year renewals. The lease was last amended on September 10, 2019 at which time 888 square feet of space that was formerly occupied by the City's Health

Nurse was added to the lease. However, 136 square feet of that office space currently being used by CASA was not accounted for in the renewal. The attached lease incorporates all the office area currently in use. CASA requests that the City renew their lease and continue to waive the rent in lieu of the City making an annual contribution to support CASA operations.

Kelli Diaz, speaking in favor of the request on behalf of CASA, said that she was the Recruitment and Development Director of CASA for Central Virginia. She said that she requested the City renew the five-year lease. She said that CASA played a crucial role in the lives of children who experienced abuse or neglect. She said that since CASA began 35 years ago in the City, they had served over 5,000 children, and they were currently the third largest CASA program in the state. She said that last year, 79 CASA volunteers served 221 children. She said that the local judges supported the CASA program and relied on the CASA reports. She said that CASA performed crucial, imperative work for the community which was unmet by any other nonprofit in the area. She said the provision of free office space was vital for them to continue their work by providing a stable and accessible location. She said that the Lynchburg office was the central hub for the regional operations, and it was necessary to provide access to the courts and training. She asked the Council to consider the costs of not supporting CASA, without which, the children would bear the impact. She said that children with a CASA volunteer were half as likely to reenter the foster care system, spending 8 months less time in the system. She said that the children were more likely to find a safe and permanent home and more likely to succeed in school. She said that the services provided by CASA saved the City costs by reducing foster care expenses.

Rex Hammond, speaking in favor of the request, asked Council to renew the five-year lease due to the positive impact of CASA on the community. He said that the current facility was uniquely situated to benefit an organization like CASA, providing convenient access to the juvenile courts and the Department of Social Services. He said that few other organizations

would benefit to the same extent. He said that moving the CASA location would disrupt all of their operations. He asked Council to approve another five-year lease.

Kevin Birnbaum, speaking in favor of the request on behalf of the CASA of Central Virginia Board, said that he had served as a board member of CASA of Central Virginia for the last three years. He said that they received financial support from regional partners through grants or in-kind contributions, and if the lease agreement were not approved, there would be a disproportionate contribution from those other partners. He said that last year was the first where they ran a deficit, and their budget would not be able to sustain the fair-market rents. He asked the Council to consider the positive community impacts of CASA. He said that when he was 12, he was removed from his home due to abuse and neglect, and a CASA advocate provided him guidance through the foster care system. He said that because of his CASA advocate, he was able to graduate high school, obtain a master's degree, and start a family.

There was no one else to speak in favor or opposition, either by phone or in-person so the public hearing was closed and the matter rested with Council.

Vice Mayor Faraldi motioned, seconded by Councilmember Wilder, to approve the resolution. Councilmember Wilder said that he had been a foster parent for 25 years and commended the work CASA had done in the community. He said that CASA provided a great service and partnership with the community.

Councilmember Helgeson said that the lease stated, "the lessor lets the premises to the lessee for a one-time payment of \$50,000 annually, which shall be waived in lieu of the City making an annual contribution." He said that this language was confusing. Mr. Benda explained that there were provisions in the lease that had been carried over from previous agreements, and staff would recommend removing the third paragraph since it did add confusion to the document.

Vice Mayor Faraldi asked how the lease should be amended to reflect the recommended staff changes. Mr. Freedman recommended that if Council, by consensus, amended the motion

to state an arbitrary dollar amount in lieu of contribution, there should be an acknowledgment that there was a money-value to the lease to give it legal weight. Vice Mayor Faraldi said that the current language was structured to show the value of what a lease would be. He said that it would be unfair to write the lease for \$1 because it would require the City to market the space at a \$1 annual rent for other potential tenants. Mr. Freedman said that was a fair statement. Vice Mayor Faraldi said that from a legal stand point, it made more sense to maintain the current lease terms as currently written.

Councilmember Helgeson said that would mean it would be at the \$20,000 rate. He said that currently, the fair-market value was \$48,270. He said that \$20,000 was as arbitrary as the dollar, and \$48,000 was a reasonable price. Mr. Freedman said that if the value was set at \$48,000, the result would be the same, and the value would only serve as an illustration of the rent. He said Council should consider whether CASA had an objection to the lease amendment because it was being approved with the assumption they would sign it.

Vice Mayor Faraldi amended his motion to reflect the \$48,270 fair-market value in the lease. Councilmember Wilder was amenable to the changes.

Mr. Birnbaum said that CASA would require a board vote to accept any changes. He said that he did not see any issue with the changes as they were to reflect the fair-market value of the lease, but that he did not have the authority to unilaterally accept the changes. Vice Mayor Faraldi asked whether it would make sense for the Council to delay action on the lease agreement until the CASA board was able to take action. Mr. Freedman said that Council could defer the matter to see CASA's position on the amendment. Vice Mayor Faraldi asked when the next board meeting would be held; Mr. Birnbaum replied that it would be in late March. Vice Mayor Faraldi asked when the current lease expired. Mr. Freedman said that the lease had expired, and had not been renewed. He said that a new lease was before Council which would commence on March 1st. He said that CASA was currently in holdover status, but the City had no objection to the organization remaining until a decision was made on the lease. Vice Mayor

Faraldi asked whether making the lease effective on May 1st would provide enough time for the CASA board to make a decision. Mr. Birnbaum said that would provide the board enough time. Mr. Freedman said that would be possible; he clarified that the lease term would be amended to May 1, 2024 through April 30, 2029, and the rents would be changed to reflect a payment of \$48,270 annually.

Vice Mayor Faraldi amended his motion to reflect changes in the lease term from May 1, 2024 through April 30, 2029, and changes in the rents to reflect a payment of \$48,270 annually. Councilmember Wilder was amenable to the changes.

Mr. Birnbaum clarified that the holdover would still be in effect; Vice Mayor Faraldi said yes.

Mayor Reed clarified that the vote would be to delay the item. Vice Mayor Faraldi said that the motion was to approve the lease as amended pending approval from the CASA board. Mr. Freedman recommended that instead of taking action at the meeting, Council should defer the matter to the first meeting in April to allow the CASA board to act first.

Vice Mayor Faraldi amended his motion to approve the amendments to the lease as articulated without approving the lease. Councilmember Wilder was amenable to the changes. He said that after the vote on the motion, they could take consensus to defer the item.

With no further discussion from the Council, the following vote was recorded:

Ayes: Reed, Faraldi, Dolan Helgeson, Misjuns, Taylor, Wilder

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Noes:

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Vice Mayor Faraldi requested to defer the item until April 9th by consensus. Mayor Reed stated that there was consensus and the item would be deferred.

// In the matter of Public Comment, Agenda Item 7, Citizen Colleen Larkins, speaking on behalf of Sandusky PTO, addressed Council regarding the budget for schools. She said that the schools faced issues of violence and literacy, where 2/3s of students who did not have proficient

literacy by 4th grade ended up incarcerated or on welfare. She said that this is what happened when schools were closed and financial decisions were made without putting schools first. She requested that Council should put education at the center of the comprehensive plan.

// In the matter of Public Comment, Agenda Item 8, Citizen Laila Daher addressed Council regarding a ceasefire. She said that God created human beings and loved them all regardless of faith or nationality.

Vice Mayor Faraldi called a point of order that only matters related to City business could be addressed during public comment. Mr. Freedman said that if the speaker was not addressing matters that directly concerned the City, its operations, or its officers, the Council was within its rights to correct the same or not permit the comment. Ms. Daher said she was addressing current issues in Lynchburg. Mr. Freedman said that the presiding officer could give the speaker leeway to continue their comment, redirect the speaker, or not allow the comment. Mayor Reed said she would allow the comment to continue as long as it pertained to City business.

Ms. Daher said that the City's tax dollars were funding genocide while in the City, residents were unable to care for themselves. She said that homeless people and students in public schools needed help in coping with personal horrors, and this help could be provided with available funds. She said that tax dollars should be kept in the City to fund programs for residents, not sent to kill and maim the people of Gaza and the West Bank. She requested that Council request the federal government to stop supporting a genocide.

Vice Mayor Faraldi called a point of order because the comments were not related to City business. Mayor Reed said she agreed with what was needed within the City; however, the content did not relate to City business. She said comments could address City revenue for City issues.

Ms. Daher said that Council should advocate for a ceasefire.

// In the matter of Public Comment, Agenda Item 9, Citizen Cynthia Capps, representing Save Sandusky/Rebuild Sandusky, addressed Council regarding rebuilding Sandusky Elementary

School. She requested that Council not approve funds for additions to Bass Elementary. She said that the Council should work with the School Board to add a line item to rebuild or renovate Sandusky Elementary. She said that closing the school was irresponsible, and literacy was improved when class sizes were kept small. She said that overcrowding cultivated an unsafe environment. She said that they had worked for five months to get more information and save Sandusky, but each request had been redirected and they had made no progress. She said that closing the school would benefit no one.

// In the matter of Public Comment, Agenda Item 10, Citizen Jordan Nesbitt addressed Council regarding the LCS Budget and potential impacts. She requested that Council deny the funding request for renovations to Bass Elementary. She said that LCS administration and School Board members had been provided a packet with data and a contact for Movement Foundation, who was a viable partner to rebuild the school at a fraction of the cost. She said that Sandusky was the third ranked elementary school in LCS, nearly at the state average for proficiency in math scores and double the state average in reading. She said that rebuilding allowed for Scenario 1, supported by 70% of the community.

// In the matter of Public Comment, Agenda Item 11, Citizen Vicente Gonzalez, speaking on behalf of Queer Town Hall, addressed Council regarding a ceasefire. He said that he was requesting the Council to adopt a resolution. He said Queer Town Hall had been working to support queer and LGBTQ+ youth in LCS who were discriminated against by the School Board. He said they stood in solidarity with Save Our Schools at Sandusky and TC Miller. He said that they stood in solidarity with comrades across the country who called on local government to pass resolutions demanding a humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza.

Vice Mayor Faraldi called a point of order because the matter did not relate to City business. Mr. Gonzalez said it was related to City business because the City was requested to approve a resolution. City Attorney Mr. Matthew Freedman said that back and forth debate was not permitted. He said that the Mayor was able to make a ruling on the point of order. Mayor

Reed said that comments could relate to City business, not matters nationally or internationally related. She said that a resolution could be requested addressing matters within the City; otherwise the comment would not be permitted.

Mr. Gonzalez asked City Council to pass a resolution requesting a ceasefire in Gaza.

Mayor Reed stated such comments did not relate to City business.

// In the matter of Budget, Agenda Item #12, Council conducted a first reading of Resolution #R-24-014 amending the FY 2024 City/Federal/State Aid Fund budget and appropriating \$189,985 from the Virginia Department of Forestry for tree maintenance and planting. Mayor Reed stated that the item appeared before the Finance Committee on February 27th, 2024. The City of Lynchburg, Department of Public Works, has been granted \$189,985 from the Virginia Department of Forestry, Urban and Community Forestry, Non-Matching Grants Program. This funding is earmarked for the acquisition of vendor services, following Virginia procurement procedures. The selected vendor will be responsible for the pruning/maintenance of 650 existing trees and the planting of an additional 250 trees in downtown neighborhoods.

Pruning for Long-Term Success:

- Address the critical age and size of existing trees.
- Undertake pruning activities of 650 trees to enhance the likelihood of long-term success and resilience, combating the heat island effect in neighborhoods.

Strategic Tree Planting:

- Plant 250 trees, giving priority to large species where possible, as a key component of the initiative to enhance the urban canopy. The designated planting sites have been pinpointed within the Public Works Department tree inventory, concentrating on blocks lacking street trees or displaying noticeable gaps in the current tree plantings.
- Ongoing support from Lynchburg Tree Stewards spanning a decade guarantees the sustained well-being of these trees, as well as dedicated care and maintenance from the Department of Public Works.

At its February 27, 2024 meeting, the Finance Committee recommended approval. As Chair of that committee, Vice Mayor Faraldi brought the committee's recommendation for approval forward as a motion. No second was required, and Council, by the following recorded vote approved the motion:

Ayes: Reed, Faraldi, Dolan Helgeson, Misjuns, Taylor, Wilder 7

Noes: 0

// In the matter of Memorials, Agenda Item #13, Council considered adopting Resolution #R-24-015 approving the installation of additional memorials to Monument Terrace. Museum Director Ted Delaney provided a summary of the request to Council. The Virginia Piedmont Chapter of the Military Order of the World Wars (MOWW) and the Lynchburg Area Veterans Council (LAVC) wish to recognize the next major American conflicts after the Vietnam War on Monument Terrace: The Gulf War (1990–1991) and Global War on Terror (2001–). The organizations are proposing a 36" x 24" bronze plaque to be installed on the northwest wall of the Purple Heart terrace. MOWW and LAVC would raise the necessary funds to purchase the memorial plaque. If Lynchburg citizens are identified who died in these conflicts, their names can be engraved on the limestone blocks of the surrounding wall.

The Lynchburg Chapter of the Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH) also wishes to install a "Soldier's Battlefield Cross" memorial sculpture in the landscaped area between the World War I terrace of Monument Terrace and the Monument Terrace building. The bronze sculpture, measuring 19" x 19" x 51", is a recognized symbol of the ultimate sacrifice among the armed forces. The MOPH has already raised the funds necessary to purchase the sculpture.

Lastly, the MOPH wishes to install a bench for the convenience of visitors on the Purple Heart terrace of Monument Terrace. The black, powder-coated, metal bench bears the Purple Heart emblem in color on the seat back and measures approximately 48" wide. It would be placed on the northeast wall of the terrace, between the steps and the north corner.

All additions or modifications to Monument Terrace must be approved by City Council. The last time an addition was made was the Desmond Doss interpretive marker on the World War II terrace in 2017. The Monument Terrace Advisory Committee has reviewed the three new proposals with their sponsors and recommends them to City Council for adoption as presented here.

Steve Bozeman, member of the Lynchburg Area Veterans Council, said that a WWII veteran, John Burch, inspired him to undertake this monument project. He said that he hoped Council would approve the new monuments.

Mayor Reed motioned, seconded by Councilmember Helgeson, to adopt Resolution #R-24-015. Mayor Reed said that it was her honor to support this labor of love. Councilmember Helgeson said that the monuments would honor veterans in the City, and he was thankful for the installations.

With no further discussion from the Council, the following vote was recorded:

Ayes: Reed, Faraldi, Dolan Helgeson, Misjuns, Taylor, Wilder	7
Noes:	0

// The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Clerk of Council