

// A regular meeting of the Council of the City of Lynchburg was held on the 14th day of January 2020, at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Treney Tweedy, President, presiding. The following members were present:

Present: Mary Jane Dolan, Jeff Helgeson, J. Randy Nelson, E. J. Turner Perrow, Sterling A. Wilder, Beau Wright, Treney Tweedy 7

Absent: 0

// In the matter of the Citizen Survey, Agenda Item #1, Ms. Bonnie Svrcek remarked that the City has been utilizing the National Research Center (NRC) to conduct the National Community Survey (NCS) every other year since 2004. This is citizen survey number seven. Ms. Joann Martin has been the lead staff person working with citizens and the staff person at NRC. Ms. Joann Martin introduced Ms. Morgan Adams, the senior research analyst with NRC. Tomorrow she will also be meeting with members of the senior leadership team and senior staff members for the City of Lynchburg. It will be a next steps workshop to make this report useful.

Ms. Adams thanked Ms. Martin for being great to work and doing a great job of getting the word out about these surveys, which is immeasurable. The NCS was developed by NRC with the ICMA. It is templated so it is less costly and also provides them with the greatest number of benchmark comparisons. They have over 600 jurisdictions in their benchmarking database. They have discovered that there are three main pillars of community livability that exist and they are community characteristics, governance and participation and within those pillars they have derived eight facets of community livability from models.

This year they sent out a scientific sampling to 1,700 households and received 377 surveys, which is a 24 percent response rate with +/- a 5 percent margin of error. They also received 82 responses on their open online survey. Those results are in a supplemental report.

Councilmember Helgeson asked about the response rate and how it compares with other years. She said it has declined and overall they have seen response rates as an industry and even out over the last five years or so. A response rate like 24 percent is very common for citizen surveys. He is concerned because if we do not address what comes out of a survey, eventually people stop answering the survey. Ms. Adams would guess that initially the City had a response rate in the mid 30 percent range. Councilmember Helgeson noted that might be what is happening then. Ms. Adams said in general she thinks people are feeling survey fatigue. If a community sees a response rate staying somewhat level, it shows that the community sees that leadership cares about the results and cares about how they feel about their City and are willing to make changes based upon their feedback.

Mayor Tweedy asked if she thinks that people feel they are being heard and are satisfied with some things. Ms. Adams said definitely. Vice Mayor Dolan would think that 24 percent response rate is pretty good and Ms. Adams said yes. NRC has been starting to see things as low as the mid teens. Smaller communities tend to have higher responses but demographics also play a very large role. Young people are less likely to respond in general.

133 of the national benchmark comparisons were available this year. 121 received similar ratings. Four received higher ratings and eight received lower ratings. The four that were higher included cost of living, the percentage of residents that work here in the community participation in religious or spiritual events and rates of volunteerism. The lower ratings tended to be related to the natural environment and a couple of mobility items. She

explained that this means that there is at least a ten point spread between the national average and the Lynchburg average for these higher or lower benchmarks.

With regard to comparing to other southern regional communities with similar populations, Lynchburg scored higher on three areas and scored lower on 11 areas. The three higher were cost of living, opportunities for religious events and working in the community. 119 received similar ratings.

Comparing our ratings between 2019 and 2017, nine received higher ratings and nine received lower ratings. 115 received similar ratings. They saw ups and down with mobility and increases in recreation and wellness. The lower ones tended to be with community engagement and natural environment.

Residents picked safety and economy as their two top priorities. Councilmember Perrow noted it is great to see people rated employment opportunities as going up. Ms. Adams explained this is obtained by asking people to rate job opportunities on a scale from excellent to poor. She explained that they should not be comparing the 47 percent satisfaction rate to other communities. They should be looking at the fact that since 2004 employment opportunities has hit an all time high. Councilmember Perrow noted that it is not where he thinks it should be, which would be something 50 percent or greater. She clarified for Councilmember Helgeson that the other economic benchmarks were consistent with their results over time. She did not want to underplay what it means to stay stable because maintaining those high services definitely speaks volumes as well.

One in two people felt the variety of housing options was excellent or good, as well as the availability of affordable quality housing. 85 percent thought that providing quality affordable housing for all income levels should be a high or medium priority. Councilmember Perrow said that seem to be conflicting and Ms. Adams commented that as a trend, they have seen these numbers plummeting, so she thinks it is great that we are still seeing some stability here in Lynchburg.

One in two people felt the City had made some or significant progress in providing housing for all income levels in the past two years. As far as housing availability options, the two areas found the most lacking were housing options for seniors and young residents.

Another key finding is that residents have mixed feelings about mobility. The overall ease of travel and ease of travel by car increased since 2017. Half were pleased with the travel by walking. She noted that public parking and traffic flow marks both increased this year as well and not by small amounts. The rest of the benchmarks measured were good and stable over time and similar to other communities.

They saw a decrease in availability of paths and walking trails. Ms. Adams said some of that could probably be attributed to construction. Councilmember Helgeson noted some of the trails are still not quite open yet from damage caused by storms. Ms. Adams said it has not been a huge decrease over time.

Residents were less pleased with alternative modes of transportation, particularly travel by bicycle. This was lower than benchmark communities. Four in ten said that transportation overall was a high priority and 55 percent said there had been some progress and 17 percent said the City had made significant progress.

The final key finding was that the natural environment presents opportunities for improvement. The residents gave high marks for air quality, garbage collection, drinking water, cleanliness, natural areas preservation and open space. Noteworthy is that the quality of drinking water has remained high over time but yard waste pickup and

recycling have gone down. The last two are lower than the benchmarks. About two-thirds of the participants said they had conserved water and recycled at home. Both of these fell below national and peer cities and conserving water decreased from 2017.

She noted that the responses to where people are getting their information remained stable since 2017. That speaks highly of the City's communications department. The results are also quite a bit higher than you normally see, especially for public meetings and the cable channel.

The highest resident priorities were treating all residents fairly and employment opportunities. The lowest resident priorities were kindergarten ready children and building partnerships. Residents said we had made a great deal of progress in these areas. Councilmember Helgeson asked if there is a disconnect then. Ms. Adams said that some of the trends they have been seeing is that as things are progressing, they become less and less a priority over time. Fewer people are saying reducing poverty is a priority because they feel like the City has been making more progress on it, for example. She clarified also that they are separate questions.

Councilmember Wilder asked Ms. Adams what they are seeing nationally as far as the housing market. He felt like the trend is people going toward single-family housing and wondered if that is what she is seeing nationally. She said in general people tend to prioritize single-family detached homes over multi-family housing. It has also been a trend that housing for seniors has become quite a hot topic. She thinks it is great that Lynchburg is maintaining that quality housing as well as its cost of living because sometimes those things do not go hand in hand. Mayor Tweedy thanked her for her presentation and said she is very encouraged. Ms. Svrcek noted they want to link this to performance measures and make our performance measures and data more in alignment with our budget decisions.

// In the matter of Roll Call, Councilmember Wright had no items. Councilmember Wilder thanked all the men in our community that came out for Men to School again. It is such a caring community. When there is a call, they always rally to it. Councilmembers Nelson, Perrow and Helgeson had no items.

// Mayor Tweedy had the following announcements: a. On Thursday, January 16th at 6:30 p.m. at Sandusky Middle School, Public Works will conduct a public meeting to discuss proposed changes to trash collection system, including bulk and brush. The meeting gives citizens an opportunity to learn about the proposed changes and provide feedback before the department presents a report to City Council on Tuesday, January 28th. b. A portion of Commerce Street will be reduced to one lane from Wednesday, January 15th through Friday, January 17th - 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. daily, the 1200 block of Commerce Street will be reduced to one lane of traffic while crews from Lynchburg Water Resources install water services for new condominiums at 1208 Commerce Street. During the work, flaggers will direct traffic. The street will remain open to all through traffic, including emergency vehicles. c. Lynchburg Parks & Recreation will host a community health event on Tuesday, January 21st in partnership with the Lynchburg Fire Department, Centra Health Trauma Services and the Diamond Hill Community Center, will host a community health event at the Diamond Hill Community Center, 1005 17th Street. At this event, basic medical and life safety techniques will be taught, including hands-only CPR training & emergency bleeding control. The event is free & open to the public and done in an open house format. d. The Community Development Advisory Committee will meet on Wednesday, January 15th at 7:00 p.m. at the Miller Center located at 301 Grove Street;

Room 304 to accept public comments prior to preparation of the City's 2020-2025 Consolidated Plan. Specifically, the public is invited to comment on the housing and non-housing community development needs common to low and moderate income persons and individuals with mental illness, intellectual and physical disabilities, substance abuse or addiction, persons with HIV-AIDS, persons that are homeless and elderly persons. e. The Annual Martin Luther King Breakfast is planned for Monday, January 20th at the Virginia Hotel beginning at 8:30 am. You may get tickets on line at Eventbrite or at the Main Branch Public Library. Tickets are \$30. f. The Bridges to Progress 90-day meeting and report out is scheduled for Thursday, January 23rd at the Miller Center at 9:00 a.m.

// The meeting was recessed at 4:36 p.m.

// City Council reconvened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium of E. C. Glass High School at 2111 Memorial Avenue. The following members were present:

Present: Mary Jane Dolan, Jeff Helgeson, J. Randy Nelson, E. J. Turner Perrow, Sterling Wilder,
Beau Wright, Treney Tweedy 7

Absent: 0

// Councilmember Perrow asked for a moment of silence to recognize the News & Advance reporter assigned to report on City matters, Olivia Johnson, who tragically died in a car accident on December 30, 2019. The moment of silence was followed by the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

// Copies of the minutes of the November 7, 2019 Council Retreat, Agenda Item #7, having been previously furnished Council, reading was dispensed with, and on motion of Vice Mayor Dolan, seconded by Councilmember Wilder, by the following recorded vote, approved the minutes as presented.

Ayes: Dolan, Helgeson, Nelson, Perrow, Tweedy, Wilder, Wright 7

Noes: 0

// Councilmember Nelson made a statement that his wife is the principal of one of the City's elementary schools. He has been advised by both the City and Commonwealth attorneys that this does not legally create a conflict of interest and he affirms that he can vote on the issues before them tonight objectively and impartially.

// Copies of the minutes of the December 10, 2019 meeting, Agenda Item #3, having been previously furnished Council, reading was dispensed with, and on motion of Councilmember Perrow, seconded by Councilmember Wilder, by the following recorded vote, approved the minutes as presented.

Ayes: Dolan, Helgeson, Nelson, Perrow, Tweedy, Wilder, Wright 7

Noes: 0

// In the matter of Budget, Agenda Item #4, Resolution #R-19-097, laid over from the December 10, 2019 meeting, was again presented and read, on motion of Councilmember Perrow and seconded by Councilmember Wilder, the FY 2020 General Fund budget was amended and \$2,652,092 was appropriated with resources from unexpended FY 2019 Schools Operating Fund for transfer to the FY 2020 Schools Operating Fund (\$990,178) and to the Schools Capital Fund (\$1,661,914) to fund needs as approved by the School Board. Also, amend the FY 2020 General Fund budget and appropriate \$33,075 to the Council/Manager Offices budget with resources from unexpended FY 2019 Schools Operating Fund for expenses associated with the work of the Task Force on the Future of PreK-12 Education and Beyond. Also, amend the FY 2020 General Fund budget and authorize \$2,322,972 with resources

from unexpended FY 2019 Schools Operating Fund to increase the Schools Textbook Reserve (\$1,122,972) and establish a Reserve for Implementing Recommendations from the Task Force on the Future of PreK-12 Education and Beyond (\$1,200,000).

Ayes: Dolan, Helgeson, Nelson, Perrow, Tweedy, Wilder, Wright 7

Noes: 0

// In the matter of Budget, Agenda Item #5, Resolution #R-19-098, laid over from the December 10, 2019 meeting, was again presented and read, on motion of Councilmember Perrow and seconded by Councilmember Wilder, the FY 2020 General, Water, Sewer, and Stormwater Funds' Operating Budgets was amended and \$350,000 was appropriated with resources from the General Obligation Public Improvement Bonds, Series 2020 for costs associated with the issuance of \$32,000,000 General Obligation Public Improvement Bonds.

Ayes: Dolan, Helgeson, Nelson, Perrow, Tweedy, Wilder, Wright 7

Noes: 0

// In the matter of Budget, Agenda Item #6, Resolution #R-19-101, laid over from the December 10, 2019 meeting, was again presented and read, on motion of Councilmember Perrow and seconded by Councilmember Wilder, the FY 2020 General Fund budget was amended and \$32,585 was appropriated with resources from the General Fund Reserve for Contingencies to provide funding to the Electoral Board/Registrar's Office for estimated costs associated with the March 3, 2019 Democratic Presidential and City Council Primary. A third quarter budget request may occur due to a possible U.S. Senate or U.S. House of Representative Primary in June.

Ayes: Dolan, Helgeson, Nelson, Perrow, Tweedy, Wilder, Wright 7

Noes: 0

// In the matter of Budget, Agenda Item #7, Resolution #R-19-103, laid over from the December 10, 2019 meeting, was again presented and read, on motion of Councilmember Perrow and seconded by Councilmember Wilder, the FY 2020 City/Federal/State Aid Fund budget was amended and \$215,474 was appropriated with resources from the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) through the Employment Advancement for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Participants Community Wealth Building (CWB) Grant.

Ayes: Dolan, Helgeson, Nelson, Perrow, Tweedy, Wilder, Wright 7

Noes: 0

// In the matter of Public Hearings, Agenda Item #8, a Public hearing was conducted to consider adopting a Resolution designating the City of Lynchburg a Second Amendment Sanctuary. Before beginning the public hearing, Councilmembers discussed establishing some special rules of procedure for the meeting, as outlined in Section 8.5 of Council's rules of procedure. Mayor Tweedy made a motion, which was seconded by Councilmember Wilder to limit the speakers to those that had signed up by 7:30 p.m. Councilmember Helgeson objected and cited an email from the Mayor where she had said that regular procedures would be followed. He objected to closing a public hearing before the public hearing is even opened. Mayor Tweedy commented that she has the prerogative to change her mind and indicated that Council has the right to change its rules of procedure before a public hearing. Councilmember Perrow objected to bar people from speaking that had not signed. It is against Council's normal rules of procedures and he noted that the signup sheet is a way to effect order. Council has traditionally allowed people to speak before a public

hearing is closed. There may be someone who was not able to get here by 7:30 p.m. to sign up to speak. He does not think it is fair to our citizens to change something abruptly. Councilmember Nelson commented that up until tonight he thinks the public thought that Council's normal rules of procedure would be followed. Normally, a person who has not had a chance to sign up to speak in a timely manner can have a chance to speak at the end. In looking at history, no government has encountered difficulties by listening to their citizens too much. The problems arise when government leaders do not listen enough.

Mayor Tweedy went over the rules of conduct for City Council meetings, which included time limits for the speakers and requesting that the audience does not applaud, jeer or cheer. She also explained to the audience that it is within Council's right to call for a vote at any time during the hearing. Councilmember Wilder asked how many people had signed up to speak and Mayor Tweedy indicated it was over 120 speakers. The City Attorney provided clarification that Council's rules of procedure do allow for Council to add special rules of procedure at any time it feels it is appropriate to do so. Due to the size of the meeting, Council is within its rights to implement some special rules of procedure that it would not normally have for a public hearing.

The motion to limit speakers to those that had signed up by 7:30 p.m. passed by the following vote:

Ayes:	Dolan, Tweedy, Wilder, Wright	4
Noes:	Helgeson, Nelson, Perrow	3

Councilmember Helgeson made a motion to allow applause, cheers and jeers because they were in an auditorium where applause is normal and tonight's topic is an emotional one. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Perrow. Councilmember Perrow added that he would like the applause, cheers and jeers to be directed to the councilmembers but when people are speaking that the audience would show them courtesy. Councilmember Helgeson accepted that as a friendly amendment. Councilmember Nelson does not disagree with Councilmembers Helgeson and Perrow but he would like to hear what everyone has to say and thinks that applause, cheers and other outbursts will just prolong the night and interfere with Council's ability to hear everyone in an expeditious manner. The motion failed by the following vote:

Ayes:	Helgeson, Perrow	2
Noes:	Dolan, Nelson, Tweedy, Wilder, Wright	5

Mayor Tweedy made a motion, which was seconded by Councilmember Wright, to limit speakers to Lynchburg residents only. Councilmember Wright noted that they are there to hear from residents of Lynchburg, to do their work and it is fully appropriate that we make space for them here tonight. They are their concern and he is fully in favor of this motion. Councilmember Helgeson noted that there have been several announcements made since the December 10, 2019 meeting and there were several errors in them that had to be corrected. None of these things were in those announcements. He noted that there are a lot of people that own property in Lynchburg or have invested in Lynchburg or work and shop in Lynchburg that are not City residents. He will not support this motion because he thinks they should hear from people and if the rules are to be changed, they should not be changed mid game. The rules should have been changed ahead of time. Councilmember Nelson stated that he would like to hear first and foremost from the citizens of Lynchburg. There are people that have a vital interest in the City that are not residents that he would like to hear from as well. He thinks it would be appropriate to hear from City residents first

and then from those outside of the City. Mayor Tweedy accepted that as a friendly amendment. Councilmember Perrow asked for clarification on outside residents that represent a group. Mayor Tweedy indicated they will receive five minutes to speak but they will hear from Lynchburg residents first. Councilmember Perrow commented that as representatives of Lynchburg, he feels he can support the amendment that Councilmember Nelson proposed. He would like to hear from all residents though tonight, no matter where they are from. The motion passed by the following vote:

Ayes:	Dolan, Perrow, Nelson, Tweedy, Wilder, Wright	6
Noes:	Helgeson	1

Mayor Tweedy noted that there are elected officials that have signed up to speak tonight. She asked Council if they would like to give any preference to allow elected officials or their representative to speak first.

Councilmember Wright did not think they needed to consider this item. He applauds the elected officials that have said they will speak in the order in which they signed up. He applauds them and thinks that makes sense. Mayor Tweedy thanked Council and indicated she had wanted to bring that as a matter for them to consider.

// Mr. Chris Feraldi spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He encouraged them to vote in favor of the resolution and to uphold their oath as elected officials wherein they swore to uphold the U.S. and Virginia Constitutions. He asked those in favor to stand. After they stood, he indicated it is the majority.

// Ms. Liz Corrales spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She is a stay-at-home mother and does not want her ability to arm herself and defend herself and her family to be limited. It is not only unconstitutional but also dangerous and irresponsible. Their guns are also needed to defend their rights from a government that may one day act out in tyranny against its own people.

// Ms. Meredith Sommers spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She said she will not feel safe in Lynchburg if she is not allowed to carry her gun. Taking away her and other women's Second Amendment rights will leave them powerless. She also pointed out the economic impacts that enforcing these laws will have on the City in terms of expensive software, added personnel and added police officers.

// Ms. Laura Pezzulo spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She asked that Council not make her a victim. She has 12 years as a law enforcement officer and has heard many horrible stories from women that were raped or beaten and she has heard from many who thought they were going to die while being robbed. She cannot rely on anyone else, including the police, to protect her if someone breaks into her home. She urged Council to stand up for their rights even if it goes against their own personal beliefs.

// Mr. Demetrius Alexander spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He read an article of the Virginia constitution regarding the right of people to bear arms not being infringed upon and some court cases that upheld this article. He also provided some statistics indicating that automatic rifles are infrequently used to commit murder. He urged them to vote in the general public's interest and vote accordingly.

// Mr. Michael Racanelli came forward to speak. He demanded Vice Mayor Dolan apologize to every veteran in the room. He noted he was from Bedford County and Mayor Tweedy noted that he signed up as a City of Lynchburg resident.

// Ms. Angie Arthur spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She feels that some members of Council already had their minds made up at the December 10, 2019 meeting. She would like them to stop passing the buck and support the constitution they are supposed to love. She said there are people in the room that have what it takes to take their seats if they are not willing to support their people. These people display the qualities of fairness, honesty and integrity and an open mind. She is having trouble finding those qualities here.

// Mr. Ben Castle spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He quoted from the Bible and mentioned that he is a pastor. Virginia is his home state but he is fearful for his state with the laws being contemplated by the state government because they will be a punishment of the good and an encouragement to the evil. That is the opposite of what civil government is supposed to do.

// Mr. Steve Timmons spoke in opposition of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. We are a republic and rulers should base decisions on rational thought not emotional appeal. This is an emotional reaction to perceived threats that in fact do not yet exist. It is not Council's role to represent them in Richmond or make determinations of constitutionality. He would beg them to let the systems in place to work as they are designed and have worked for them thus far. He also thinks this resolution inhibits the discovery of reasonable solutions through thoughtful efforts. It also poses a potentially serious threat to public order in the future.

// Ms. Katie Cyphert spoke in opposition of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She is heartened by moderate Democrats in Richmond who are expressing their skepticism and reservation about certain pieces of legislation. The process is working in Richmond and that is where the process should work. She is also concerned with the words "all citizens" in the resolution and wondered if it includes those prevented from owning firearms due to violent felony convictions, unsupervised minor children or adjudicated mentally incapacitated. She was also concerned with the language regarding expending funds because there is no end date and no fiscal impact statement.

// Ms. Shirley Arthur spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She can think of no greater right than the right to defend herself. She thinks passing this resolution sends a clear message to the General Assembly that a woman's right protect herself, if need be, is being protected. She thinks if these bills are passed that law enforcement officials will have to spend their time taking away guns from law abiding citizens and risking their lives to do so. Their time would be better spent investigating and fighting real crimes and protecting the City's residents.

// Mr. Curt Dimer spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He told Council that the people are the sovereigns and they loaned Council the right to sit up there. They are asking them to represent them by passing this resolution. He had a petition to present to them with over 2,000 names on it but is not sure they read the last one he presented to them. He also spoke for a woman who lives in Ward 2 that is counting on them to continue to defend her rights and pass the Second Amendment resolution unchanged.

// Mr. Dan Keeney spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He said he witnessed the General Assembly passing on to the senate floor unconstitutional bills yesterday that trample our rights. The Second Amendment confirms and ensures that we will be able to protect all of the United States Bill of Rights. He asked Council to do the right thing and make Lynchburg a Second Amendment sanctuary city.

// Mr. Dustin Childress spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He commented that the first infringement on the Second Amendment was the National Firearms Act of 1934. These stipulations and regulations only stop law-abiding and caring citizens from exercising their rights. We have the right to protect and preserve our lives. The definition of infringe is to limit or undermine something or to encroach on it. It was recognized by our forefathers that we are to be stronger than our government as to not be taken over by the government. He also pointed out that criminals will ignore gun laws and law-abiding citizens should have their rights protected.

// Ms. Nicole Childress spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. Statements that say this resolution is meaningless leave them helpless, voiceless and ineffective as a city. They have the right to appeal to their government when unconstitutional laws are being forced on them. Councilmembers are the representatives of the City and the people here tonight have come to express opposition to these constitutionally invalid laws. Council is bound to uphold the U.S. and Virginia Constitutions not the agenda of Richmond.

// Mr. Robert Flint spoke in opposition of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He said he left his M16 behind when he left Vietnam. He does not need an assault rifle whose only purpose is to kill lots of people. He does not need bump stocks or silencers or large capacity magazines. He has hunted all his life and has rifles and shotguns and no one is proposing to take those away from him.

// Mr. Tim Yonts spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He noted that they will not find a group of people more concerned with public safety than Second Amendment advocates because they understand the inherent connection between public safety and the right of every individual to keep and bear arms. The laws proposed by the General Assembly would turn law abiding citizens into felons for possessing firearms and accessories that they lawfully obtained. The laws do not exhibit moderation or a spirit of compromise but rather exude a spirit of elitism and jackbooted thuggery stopped only by the momentum of the sanctuary movement. When local political leaders allow state political leaders to criminalize their constituents, they surrender the moral authority to lead. If they do not pass the Second Amendment resolution, he would like them to reconsider the moderate proposal put forward by Councilmember Nelson at the December 10, 2019 meeting.

// Mr. David Zilles spoke in opposition to the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He is concerned with the resolution because it would give Lynchburg the unfounded power to not enforce potentially lifesaving gun laws that it deems unconstitutional. They cannot deem a state law unconstitutional because that is a blatant disregard for the rule of law and our State's Constitution. These matters need to be decided by litigation in the courts and ultimately the Supreme Court. He would like them to use the democratic processes our founding fathers provided us to vote for the state representatives we think represent us the best and to meet and work with our state lawmakers or run for a state legislative seat ourselves to serve the will of the people.

// Ms. Carrie Riddle spoke in opposition of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She told a personal story about her encounter with an abusive man. She feels that common sense gun reform such as extreme risk protective orders or "red flag laws" should be considered. Several laws, such as HB240 are the beginning step forward to accomplish this method and it is unfair to assume all bills currently proposed in the General Assembly are unconstitutional and strictly against the everyday gun owner.

// Mr. Michael Graham spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He addressed Vice Mayor Dolan directly regarding emails that he had sent her and she had forwarded to others. He provided Council an estimate of how much it would cost them to house the people that would need to be jailed because they would be breaking the law and stipulated that the City does not have that much money. He estimated that 25 percent of the population would be breaking the law and Council would have to build more jails and hire more clerks and more police officers.

// Mr. William Jennings spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He saw in Afghanistan what the abuse of power can do. The citizens had no way to defend themselves because the average Iraqi citizen had no gun. These steps are only a first step and the right to bear arms was put in the Constitution for a reason. For people that do not believe it, spend some time reading the Federalist Papers. We need to make a statement to Richmond that we will not follow.

// Mr. Steve Troxel spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city and on behalf of the Freedom Caucus of 6th Congressional District. He mentioned that they won a case in Federal District Court and the Federal Court of Appeals regarding an unconstitutional law called the Incumbent Protection Act. The State declined to take it to the U.S. Supreme Court. This case cost the State a lot of money. The gun laws are unconstitutional and will be challenged in court and the state will have to pay attorney fees for both sides when it loses. The City of Lynchburg could be financially liable as well if it supports these laws with its silence. In order to save a lot of money, Lynchburg needs to pass this ordinance. The General Assembly passed House Bill 1160, which prohibited Virginia from assisting the federal government in the unlawful detention of U.S. citizens under the 2012 National Defense Authorization Act, establishing the principle that a subordinate level of government has the authority and indeed the responsibility to refuse to cooperate with a higher level of government when the higher government enacts a law which violates the Constitution of the United States.

// Mr. Richard Burke spoke in opposition of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. The outcry for this measure appears to be a rejection both of facts and of reason. No one is seriously expecting the banning of all firearms in Virginia. No reasonable person is seriously anticipating the forced confiscation of firearms. Gun right advocates have made these claims for decades to justify their opposition to even the most reasonable legislation. Extremists on either side of an issue are always a danger to society. He would like them to side against extremism and make the judgment that Lynchburg benefits from common sense gun laws.

// Ms. Corey Thomas spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She thinks they are at a crossroads for how our citizens will be allowed by law to arm and defend themselves. She feels women are underrepresented in this issue. She had statistics to provide Council regarding higher numbers of crimes against women versus men. The practical outcome of these laws will make the citizens of Virginia more vulnerable in situations and women will be the most vulnerable of all. The women of Lynchburg are counting on Council to support their right to defend themselves.

// Mr. Lorenzo Saenz spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He noted that it is our unalienable right to have freedom of speech and to be able to protect ourselves. He asked if he is supposed to

wait for the police who have astounding response times when he needs to defend himself. He also asked Council what they would do if someone came to harm their family.

// Mr. Evan Murch spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He pointed out that laws do not create an ethical people. Only the fear of God can create an ethical people. The answer is always to bring the fear of God back into the public square. The Second Amendment was put in place so they can defend themselves against evil criminals whether they are among us as thugs or in Richmond so they cannot tyrannize us.

// Ms. Aleta Robertson spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She no longer feels safe in her neighborhood. She got her concealment permit and feels safer. She needs Council to support her and to support this resolution.

// Mr. Early Bryant spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He does not support these new gun laws because they will make citizens felons and they will lose their jobs and their right to vote. Mr. Bryant wished to yield his time to another citizen. Mayor Tweedy indicated she was not signed up on the speaker list and called the next person.

// Delegate Wendell Walker spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He has a great concern regarding the direction Virginia is headed concerning public safety and our ability to protect ourselves. If we lose our Second Amendment rights, then we know the First Amendment will be next. The ballot box is the place for this battle. He fears we are on a slippery slope to tyranny. He read a portion of the Declaration of Independence. He commented that the answer is not in our government but in our faith in the Word of God and he read a passage from the Bible.

// Ms. Jennifer Brown spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She represents the 6th District Republican Committee and is also the president of Second Amendment Alliance. The Second Amendment is not negotiable. We are fighting for a right that has already been guaranteed. She implores every single conservative constitutional patriot here today to join their local Republican Committee so we can vote those that are going to infringe on our constitutional freedoms out. She is an attorney and acknowledged we are a nation of laws but the Constitution is the law of the land by which all other laws shall abide. Criminals will not abide by these laws and the only ones who will suffer are those of us who will no longer be able to defend ourselves. This is not about gun control. It is about control of the people and silencing those that do not agree.

// Mr. Ryan Thomas spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He commented that if a law is unethical, the moral failure lies not only with those that wrote it but with also with all who enforce it. We were just doing our jobs has never been and never will be an acceptable defense for carrying out unethical orders. This cannot be punted to the courts because the courts have upheld contemptible legislation in the past. Council's moral duties transcend their legal ones and they have the power to act.

// Mr. Landon Rigglesman spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. Some Councilmembers expressed that this is not a local issue but it is Council that will enforce these laws and will tell our sheriff and police chief to go around and collect firearms. It is Council that will say they must go and it is putting them in harm's way. He commented that the founding fathers trusted the American people with the right and

responsibility to bear arms. He asks Council to give them that same right and to trust their constituency. If Council will not, they can certainly elect members of Council who will.

// Ms. Mary Ellen Gordon-Scudder spoke in opposition of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. Her minister and others are praying for a peaceful resolution of this painful gun safety issue. She also speaks for other citizens of Lynchburg that could not be there but share her concern. She would propose that we show respect for our system of state government. If you object to the laws, you should contact your state representatives and you should go to lobby day next week. She thinks many of the proposed gun laws seem reasonable such as universal background checks.

// Mr. Jordan Olacha spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. People have the right to be alive and that is closely married to the idea of liberty. The idea of people being killed by others or a government killing its people is what we are protecting ourselves from by ensuring that life is a right. We are not talking about a society of just us and the military and the idea that it is just going to be people fighting the military is just ridiculous. It is Council's job to represent the people and the people want you to protect their rights not to protect some weird agenda that attacks the premise of the country.

// Mr. Tim Wiger spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He does not the three categories of sheep, wolves and sheepdogs are sufficient to include everyone. Where do the leftist lawmakers fit? He believes they see themselves as ranchers and have dominion over the sheep and sheepdogs and act as if they have dominion over the wolves. These arbitrary rules are the first step down the path of disarmament. He asked them to remember the relationship between the sheep and the rancher and that it never ends well for the sheep.

// Reverend Dr. Richard Helein spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. This is not about gun safety. This is about power grabbing and it is starting in Richmond. This is a national issue and Council took the same oath. If you cannot vote to protect them from Richmond, then the next thing you should do after your no vote is to furnish your resignation. This is exactly the moment that our founding fathers feared. Pass laws that convict and deal with criminals and behavioral health.

// Mr. Joshua Worley spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. Most mass shootings have occurred in gun free zones where citizens have not been able to properly defend themselves. People are not going to easily surrender their guns. Why would anyone expect cooperation with an outright ban of previously legal weapons without compensation and with such a ban already prohibited by the Second Amendment? Gun control has also had a history of disproportionately affecting poor black and minority communities leaving them more vulnerable to crime including voter intimidation and hate crimes.

// A representative for Senator Steve Newman read a statement from him. He does not presume to tell elected officials what to do in their elected capacity so he will not start tonight. We are a critical time in our commonwealth's history and the next 53 days will determine if our constitutional freedoms remain intact. The Second Amendment is under attack today but tomorrow it could be the First Amendment or the Fourth Amendment.

// Mr. John Miska spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He asserts that outside individuals have bought and paid for a General Assembly that does not represent all of the people. We as a free people are not subjects.

// Mr. Roger Fons spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He is not sure if Council knows how powerful the words “shall not be infringed on” really are. He comes from Detroit where citizens were asked by the Chief of Police to get concealed permits and violence went down 25 percent.

// Mr. Jack Gary Underwood spoke in opposition of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. The U.S. Supreme Court holds the ultimate power to interpret the Second Amendment. We all think our opinions are right regarding the Second Amendment but they have no legal weight. The Supreme Court has protected our Second Amendment rights very strongly but has said they are not unlimited. City Council does not have the right to impose its interpretation of the Second Amendment on state legislation and is preempted from passing any resolution that conflicts with state law. Local government also does not have the right to regulate firearms. That right is restricted to Virginia code. He also mentioned that Virginia is a Dillon Rule state.

// Mr. Josiah Wyble spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He cited moments in history when people have rebelled and fought because there was a high governing authority oppressing and violating people’s rights. This is what we call tyranny. He does not want himself or his children or future generations to live in a country subject to tyranny. The governmental courts are not infallible and it is unwise and ignorant to believe so. It is the people’s responsibility and duty to correct the government when it overreaches or seeks to take away rights clearly laid out in the Constitution.

// Mr. Zechariah Pratt spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He implored Council to not let their right to keep and bear arms to be infringed. He stands before them as one of the many youth in the City and State. They do not know war and do not fully understand the cost at which freedom is bought but he will pursue every legislative, diplomatic and persuasive avenue to stand against tyranny.

// Mr. Stephen Semuienick spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He commented that we have come to recognize that great differentials in power can negate one’s ability to give consent and once given, can be withdrawn. The inability to say no equals the inability to say yes. It is so with our political and legal relationships as well. Our rights are unalienable and cannot be bargained away, sold or traded. No one can consent in our name should we say otherwise no matter how valid their elected status.

// Mr. George Caylor spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He commented that this is a national issue because it is microcosm of what is going on in America and whether we are going to support tyranny or freedom. He mentioned the Jim Crow laws, which are now called the “red flag laws.” They are going to pick out certain people that are not going to be able to carry guns. We are hard pressed to find a historical precedent where a government did not register and then eradicate the people. This is an opportunity that is not likely to come again. People can see who voted for it and who did not and say those people were brave and supported Lynchburg.

// Ms. Gladys Helein spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She directly spoke to the Mayor and Vice Mayor and said they have not provided the same respect to citizens that they demanded and voted this evening to silence citizens and disrespecting their citizens and infringing upon their First Amendment rights. She finds their actions disgusting, embarrassing and appalling to the City. She wants to walk away tonight a proud citizen and wants them to respect their citizens by voting to defend them and the ultimate law of the land, the U.S. Constitution.

// Mr. Craig Delucca spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He commented that what Richmond is doing is subordinate to the supreme law of the land, which is the U.S. Constitution. He is sure they would not be okay with ripping apart other amendments, such as the First or the Nineteenth Amendment. To those that are outraged by the way Council is treating us and our rights, we need to get serious about elections and stop avoiding political conversations look into those running for office and make sure they are going to represent you. If we continue to be apathetic, then we will continue to lose our rights.

// Mr. Jonathan McMillan spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He feels led to speak up for unlawful oppression on people's liberties to protect and train themselves while building a safer community. The common sense gun law rhetoric claiming to make Virginia safer is a persuasive narrative that sounds attractive on its face but has a nasty authoritarian backbone because they target law abiding citizens. They are not asking them to disobey the law but not to use taxpayers to take away our Second Amendment and other rights. It is a symbolic resolution that he urges them to take tonight.

// Mr. Tomas Straka spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He commented that every leftist regime's goal was to disarm for total control. He can trust him because he came from one of those countries. If gun control worked, places like Los Angeles, Chicago and Baltimore would be the safest places and they are not. Law enforcement without the support of community cannot work well. City Council has the police under its command and their weapons could be turned against the citizens for exercising their rights. That cannot be tolerated. He asked Council to do its job and its duty and protect the constitution.

// Ms. Breana Rock spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She outlined some history regarding Adolf Hitler and said this is what can happen when the government has too much power and that is what we are facing in the State of Virginia. Elected officials will not always look out for our best interest. They are looking out for their own. She mentioned a report from Freedom in the World that analyzes global political rights and civil liberties, 2018 marked the 13th year consecutive year of global freedom decline. It may have no legal precedent but it does send a clear message to our General Assembly that we the people of Virginia will not accept tyranny, as is being demonstrated in Richmond.

// Mr. Nate Rock spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He is asking Council to sacrifice and actively stand in defiance of the misguided will of the General Assembly. He thinks that the question of losing comforts is at the heart of the matter. It is not comfortable to resist something whether it is just or unjust and requires effort, stress and uncertainty and even fear and loss. In times like this, the law is the dividing and for our nation, a set of laws were implemented for our wellbeing. They are not asking Council to legally rebel against the General Assembly. They are asking Council to abide by the law that is over the General Assembly, which forbids them from stopping that law's use. Richmond may try to take things from Lynchburg because of this action and this means sacrifice in some manner may be required.

// Mr. John Sines spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He is asked as a pastor if Jesus would have a gun and he says no but He did tell us to be armed and quoted from the Bible. He discussed the events of a shooting at E. C. Glass recently that involved students illegally purchasing guns. He asked them how more gun control would have prevented these illegal activities. He quoted some statistics regarding deaths from

handguns and asserted that using cell phones while driving is a great threat to our society. If Council thinks this is an oppressive crowd tonight and does not make this a sanctuary city, wait until the next election.

// Mr. Mike Sharrett spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He is there to say that good people stop evil people with guns. He does not look at people here that are opposed to this as against his views. He looks at them like a human being and he values their life. There are people that will be sheepdogs for them and step up to protect them just as that person in Texas. He is suggesting they press “pause” and then seeing what happens with these laws as they are challenged in the courts. It will be a huge relief on our law enforcement, which is already understaffed. If most of the people in the room tonight say that they would like the City to be an “orange” City, that is how he would like them to vote tonight.

// Mr. Hoyt Alford spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary City. No matter how they vote, he would like to take this opportunity to see what we did wrong last time to allow this to happen. Only 48 percent of the population voted last time, which is a sad state for all of us. We should have civil discourse with those that disagree and should inform them when they are under incorrect statements if we believe it and then listen to them when we may disagree with them. He has lived in dictatorships around the world and their governments treat their people in the most appalling ways. People are concerned that we go down that path and though unlikely, there is that chance.

// Mr. Walt Carey spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He commented that if you allow the politicians to go through their agenda, it will not be long before no one is safe. If you think they will stop with assault weapons, you are sadly mistaken. If someone wants to do you bodily harm, he or she will find a way to do it. If Lynchburg does not become a sanctuary city, he sees an economic downturn because people will not come here to live or shop. He thinks their vote will determine whether they really love the people in your districts.

// Mr. Harrison Wiger spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He thinks they should be looking at the data to see if these laws actually achieve their desired intent. There is data that says that these proposed policies will actually increase violent crime in the state. Gun bans have been proven extremely ineffective in reducing mass shootings and violent crimes as a whole in the regions in which they are implemented. If we want to look at solving this issue, we need to be willing to look at multiple possible solutions, such as arming teachers that are willing to do so. We can be sure that when the laws fail to lower homicide, then the lawmakers will be back to impose further restrictions that will only make matters worse.

// Mr. Jim Meredith spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He mentioned several great leaders and said great men and women are not born. They rise to the moment. People who capitulate are forgotten. Laws are granted to us by the Constitution and have been guaranteed by the blood of patriots. As elected officials, their primary role is to defend and protect our rights from those who would take them from us. Those in Richmond do not care about Virginia history because they are elitists. An elitist supports the concept of a government run by a small group of people. Council’s legacy will be established by what they do with the big issues in their tenure.

// Ms. Hope McRorie spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment City. It seems to her that we are allowing fewer and fewer people to push their will on the rest of us. Liberty as envisioned by our founding fathers

has been slowly moving away from us. She thinks the Democrats in the General Assembly want to control all law abiding citizens, both black and white. She thinks they thought citizens would be too busy to notice. They trusted government to look after them but they are attacking. If Council supports measures that hurt people physically, mentally or financially, you will be held responsible.

// A lady who did not identify herself spoke on behalf of Kathy Gerber and in opposition of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She feels it is necessary to be armed sometimes but fails to see how the founding fathers could have envisioned a weapon such as an AK-47. She pointed out that “all men” in the Constitution has been expanded to include women and black people. We have wised up some and we do not live in a colonial society. The fact that people here lack faith in the government because they do not agree with the people that were duly elected scares her.

// Mr. Andy Langeland spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He is concerned that a shooter recently got away from the McDonald’s on Wards Road and could have come to his house. He is concerned that his wife might not be able to protect herself with the guns she would be allowed to have and might need more rounds than they allow. He is from California and recently moved to Lynchburg and is happy that he is able to exercise his Second Amendment rights thanks to the current laws of Virginia. He knows firsthand from living in California that gun laws do not limit violent crime.

// Mr. Barry Waltz spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He supports this, although he does not like calling it a sanctuary. He does not think it goes far enough but he will take what he can get and that is the City will use its prosecutorial discretion to not enforce any of the new gun laws. He has seen dumb things done by the smartest people when he was in the Navy and it has reinforced for him that common sense is not very common. If you want to talk about common sense, let’s start talking about doing mental health reform.

// Ms. Luchy Alvarado spoke in opposition of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city because it is outside the scope of City Council and has no legal significance. We should not use our local government and limited resources to pick and choose the laws we abide by. We need to take the conversation to Richmond so that new legislation takes into consideration responsible gun ownership and the voices of our City.

// Mr. Jason Burger spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He said he carries a gun to protect his family and will protect others that are not armed if evil shows up. He is a patriot and a warrior and a citizen of Lynchburg and he will not bow to any so called laws that threaten his freedoms or ability to protect his family or way of life. Our freedoms and rights are in the balance and being challenged and he remains ready to defend. He asked Council to do the right thing.

// Mr. Jeffrey Rosner spoke in opposition of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. The agenda summary says there is no fiscal impact but the resolution includes the possibility of court action. The resolution is not properly presented because there could be a fiscal impact from court action. The words “all citizens” would include convicted felons, those judged mentally incompetent by the court and small children. If passed, the City would be in conflict with existing laws not just proposed ones. He commented that we have several rights that are guaranteed by the Constitution but they are still limited. Passing common sense limitations on the right to bear arms

does not take that right away. He also mentioned that much of the conversation has focused on Senate Bill 16, which was withdrawn yesterday.

// Mr. John Maunder spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He lives in California for 45 years and saw the state begin to implement tyrannical laws and he watched the citizens of California let it happen. He came to a place of freedom and a place where the things he believes are celebrate. He sees in Virginia a people that are willing to rise up, look people who are wrong in the eye and say no and he proud to be in Virginia and encourages everyone to keep standing up to the evil that is encroaching in their lives right now.

// Ms. Sandra Bowen spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city because she wants to stand up when our constitutional rights are being viciously violated. They want to stand with our state and say no to the governor. They need City Council to stand with them and protest this atrocity because with the stroke of a pen overnight the citizens of Virginia will become criminals. Our governor wants to disarm us as Germany did to their citizens. The governor is anticipating arresting thousands of people who do not give up their constitutional rights.

// Mr. Josh Duffy spoke. He did not specify if he was in favor or opposition of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He commented that they don't have just two options. We can do things as leaders that are outside of those two kind of binary decisions. Regardless of their decision, there is more that can be done and he personally looks to them as leaders to think outside the box and show them those opportunities that they might be aware of other than the flip of a coin.

// Ms. Megan Phillips spoke and addressed some of the comments that have been made tonight. She pointed out that first machine gun was invented in 1718. She thinks our founding fathers were smart and knew that things were not always going to stay the same. Someone said that guns take lives and Ms. Phillips said people take lives and do not always use a gun. Evil people take lives and guns can also save lives when good people use them as happened in the church in Texas. She pointed out that people that want to commit suicide will find a way to do it even if their firearms are taken away because of "red flag laws."

// Ms. Amber Haskew spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city and represented the organization called Lynchburg Republican City Committee. She shared a personal story where she was in fear of being abducted and hopes they will listen to her story and stand up for the women whose stories did not end up like hers. She signed up for a gun class so she could protect herself. She would like to know if they will side with someone in Richmond who has never met her and whose legislation would only embolden these kinds of attacks or will they will side with her and defend her right to protect her own life and her children's lives. The LRCC believes women should have the right to protect themselves and it should not be a partisan issue.

// Ms. Jennifer Staten spoke in opposition of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She asked Council to continue doing the business of the City of Lynchburg and focus on our public schools and public services and continue to make our City a great place to raise a family. They need to know that when they call the police that they will uphold the common sense gun laws that will pass. She thanked them for opposing this resolution.

// Ms. AJ Richards spoke in faovr of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She owns a company run by women and they have the need to protect themselves. She is going to use any gun that she owns that is legal to protect herself, her female employees and her possessions. Law enforcement is rarely there when the crime is

happening. She does not trust the governor with her safety as a black/white/Native American woman and she hopes Council does not either.

// Mr. Hart Green spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He is not sure about the legalities of Council being able to stop these laws from being prosecuted. It seems to him the Commonwealth Attorney would be pressing charges and not Council. To him, it is a symbolic gesture to stand with the rest of the counties around them. Do we want to stand apart from the approximately 98 percent of Virginia counties and cities have become sanctuaries? He thinks if Council is not careful and does not listen to the ones with the orange stickers tonight, they are going to get voted out. There are plenty of people that will take their seat.

// Mr. Brad Bullock spoke in opposition of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He appreciates very much the passion of those speaking tonight and he thinks we can all agree that we have been able to exercise the rights that in the Bill of Rights. He would encourage them to vote and put into power people that they think will represent them best. This resolution seems to skip a constitutional procedure and wants to preempt due process. We have a legal process to challenge unconstitutional laws. He does not think our City should pass resolutions based on fear of what state or federal lawmakers might do.

// Ms. Sarita Manian spoke in opposition of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She said she believes in the Constitution's strengths and processes and this country's democracy that allows for this diversity of opinions here. We are not an Iraq or an Afghanistan and it is this rule of law that preserves us in terms of our democratic values. She acknowledged those that had shared their fears but does not share in the emotional fear of the repetition of a tyranny from centuries ago. She fears that if citizens are armed as a militia against our state representatives, then we would become an Iraq or an Afghanistan and it would be a tragic place to be. She would like to see the City enshrine the democratic values in continuing to respect a variety of views and perspectives.

// Mr. Joel Fernando spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He believes tyranny does happen because his parents faced tyranny in Sri Lanka to the point where they saw family members killed right before their eyes. The longer he lives in America, the more he understands the importance of the right to bear arms. He urged them not to make this about mistakes from the past long ago. These are mistakes that are currently made in countries all over the world.

// M. Larry Lansing spoke against the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He thinks it is a really sad and scary state of affairs when our civil discourse is reduced to threats and intimidation. It is even sadder and scarier when our President encourages this type of thuggish behavior. He believes that the Constitution allows elected bodies in this country to legislate common sense gun control laws with a reasonable expectation that the local authorities will enforce them. He trusts that the majority of the City Council will not be intimidated by the vocal minority of the constituents and the vocal majority of non-constituents and vote against this resolution.

// Mr. Clint Hunter spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He asserted that the City already takes a position on state and federal issues. The legislative agenda that Council approves every year is a wish list of what it thinks the state government should be doing. Taking an official position on this issue tonight is no different. He would like Council to listen to the clear majority of this City that elected you and vote in favor of the resolution.

// Mr. Jamie Cash spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. The Second Amendment should not be up for debate. It is not the gun that is good or bad but the person wielding it and his heart that is good or bad. He attributes a lot of the fear to the fact that people do not know about guns. They will listen to politicians and think they are right when in actuality they do not know the first thing about guns. He is so offended and flabbergasted because we should not even be here tonight.

// Mr. Noah Trevi spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He does not think Council is the next Hitler or Stalin but he also thinks they are only men and women and not angels (referring to a quote in the Federalist Papers). The Second Amendment is the only thing that keeps citizens from becoming loyal subjects and our governors from being our rulers. Before they take his guns, they need to prove the angelic status of their person. This resolution would put up another line of defense between your citizens and the next Hitler, Stalin or Mao who were also only men. Making this a sanctuary city for gun rights would also make this city a sanctuary for human right.

// Ms. Samantha Burns spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. Quoting some statistics from the FBI, she stated that guns are not a problem in terms of the percentage of crimes being committed with guns. According to the FBI, there is 38 percent less violent crimes being committed than in the year 2000. She would like to know why we are not passing laws against the criminals.

// Ms. Tim Fletcher spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. The current laws seek to limit law abiding citizens the access to weapons in an effort to stop or inhibit the evil deeds of others but the real issue is the heart of the criminal. True freedom comes from having the ability to resist but choosing not to do so. These laws are at best well-meaning but extremely misguided attempts to stop evil and at worst are tyrannical. The doctrine of the lesser magistrates declares that when a higher authority makes an unjust or immoral law, the lower ranking civil authority has both the right and duty to refuse obedience to that superior authority. Upholding the rights of your citizens is not meaningless.

// Mr. Michael Maunder spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He came here from California and was hoping to escape the kind of tyrannical laws that have been passed there. The doctrine of the lesser magistrates has been part of our Western legal and political tradition for hundreds of years. Council has 500 years of legal and political tradition standing behind it saying that not only do they have the right but the responsibility to take action to protect our rights when another power is trying to take those rights away. He hopes Council has the courage to match that authority.

// Mr. Tim Griffin spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. What they are asking tonight is for Council to reaffirm the law, to reaffirm the Constitution, to reaffirm what our founding fathers put forward for us. It is our birthright and always has been. He knows most people on Council and they are good people and are looking to do the right thing. The Constitution has a prohibition on what we call ex post facto laws, which basically means that if it is legal to do it today, you cannot make it illegal tomorrow and make a criminal out of a law abiding citizen. We are not asking them to change anything or to change the status quo. We are not asking them to repeal any laws or change any laws. We are asking Council to keep things as they are.

// Ms. Kate Staton spoke in favor of the City enforcing the common sense gun laws that will soon be passed in Virginia. She wants the police and the Commonwealth Attorney to be able to prosecute parents that allow their minor children access to their unsecured firearms. She asks them to vote against this resolution in memory of her friend Biggs who is a victim of gun violence. The gun laws are personal to her because she does not want any more gun violence like this again in Lynchburg.

// Mr. Peter Alexander spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He does not think that this Council should have any question about what their duty is to the residents and citizens. He has taken an oath to uphold the Constitution several times in his life. Guns do not kill people. People kill people. He read a quote from Justice John Marshall, U.S. Supreme Court Justice, “a law repugnant to the Constitution is void and that courts, as well as other departments, are bound by that instrument.” Politicians have wasted no time attempting to create repugnant laws.

// Reverend T. C. Hynard spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He said Virginia is where California was when he was a kid when he watched little by little the gun rights being stripped away. Crime increased as they were stripped away. Gun control laws do not work because they do not affect criminals. The Constitution does not grant us the right to bear arms. It simply affirms that right and implies that it is an inherent right. They are not asking Council to create anything new; just uphold the Constitution and support the laws we already have and support your constituency and we will support you.

// Ms. Niro Rasanayagam spoke in opposition of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She also emigrated from Sri Lanka and she saw the violence a previous speaker mentioned. What he neglected to tell you is that after the ethnic violence erupted, Sri Lanka descended into 30 years of civil war. Both sides had guns so guns and arms are not the way to achieve peace and justice. That is achieved through democratic means such as the one we are having right now. Since we are a Dillon Rule state, local municipalities must abide by and defer to state laws and legislation. She thinks each of them deep down knows that this debate belongs in Richmond and not here. This resolution will be confusing and will put our local law enforcement in a compromised position.

// Mr. Josh McCracken spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He commented that apart from the right to life, the right to defense is the most important human right. Council is not elected to represent interests in other states or other parts of Virginia or appointed by the General Assembly. They are elected by the citizens of Lynchburg to pursue policies that we want. If Richmond wants to pass laws, Lynchburg citizens do not agree with, then the Commonwealth should be forced to enforce their own laws.

// Mr. Jared Proffitt spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. Typically this would not be something for local government but he believes our state government has been compromised by people outside of Virginia with money. People here tonight have been seeing our rights being taken away for 50 years. He does not think it is a coincidence that we live in the best country. He thinks it was designed and we have a foundation that needs to be upheld. He told Council this is not just a regular thing. It is serious.

// Mr. William Kerr spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. This is not a matter of just policy. It is a matter of right and wrong and the councilmembers will be held accountable for the choice they made. There are merits to all the arguments made here tonight but this is about obedience or disobedience to the

will of God. God has revealed in his Word that the proper exercise of civil justice by the civil magistrate be explicitly limited to the punishment of the evildoer for the defense of innocent. Legislative force outside of this singular focus is unjust and abusive. To comply with an unjust imposition is to bring guilt on yourself and he asked them to do what God requires of them and uphold justice and defend and do not comply with tyranny.

// Ms. Merry Joy DeCarmo spoke in opposition of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She trusts the veracity of the Constitution and our government process. She does not think that the Constitution is so weak that we would need to break the law in order to support it. She is a gun owner and is no afraid of common sense gun laws. The laws will keep the guns out of the hands of women's would be abusers and not take away the rights of women to defend themselves. This resolution would not protect but instead would give in to unfounded fears. She asked Council to recognize that one side has been very rude and another side has been very polite.

// Mr. Jerry Coffey spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. Some of the localities that have become Second Amendment sanctuary cities are in the most liberal areas such as Virginia Beach. Elected officials in other localities have listened to their citizens and passed the resolutions because they wished to support their voters. They acted, perhaps even against what they personally wanted and perhaps even when they felt it was not their organization's purpose. They ask Council to support its citizens and pass a resolution against any law that infringes on any of their constitutional rights.

// Ms. Carol Sosnoski spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. She mentioned a situation recently where there was a manhunt in her neighborhood for a violent criminal. She slept fine because she has her concealed permit but this is something that Richmond is trying to take away from them. The laws purport to be about safety but if passed, they will endanger everyone and cause us all to live in fear. It is our duty and the duty of our local government authorities to resist this encroachment on our liberty.

// Mr. Jonathan Eagle spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He wanted to focus on the word "shall." Webster's says it means to express what is inevitable or to express a command. When used in law, regulations or directive, it means to express what is mandatory. The law is not expressly aware of the grave consequences when shall is used within the code but often uses "shall" to equally qualify the severe and necessary ramifications of violations of that code. The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

// Dr. Zachariah Jensen spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He moved here from California and like Virginia because he likes moving to a free state. He is encouraged by the 2A sanctuary movement because it is a voice telling Richmond where we stand. We can argue the common sense gun laws, which are based off of flawed studies and not much discourse. There is a lot of emotion that goes into it. He asks to be representative and asks that Virginia not go down this path and that we send a message.

// Mr. Jim Whitaker spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He has sat in their seat and has listened to what citizens have to say. It is easy to sit there and legislate but it is more important to get out into the community and see what is really going on. He is out and about as a chaplain and a restoration officer with heroes every day. He encouraged them to do the same. To make informed decisions, they need to be informed and the best way is to be on the street with our police officers. Tonight is about speaking loud and clear to legislators before they pass laws that may take away our constitutional rights.

// Sheriff Don Sloan spoke as a constitutional officer. He swore an oath to support and defend the U.S. and State Constitutions and the Constitutional Amendments. He will do anything to protect his family. It is very important to him that people know that he cares and that he loves the community of Lynchburg. He wants all of the citizens of Lynchburg to know that he does not take his liberties lightly and he supports them. He is able to do what he does because of what the military has done for us. He wants them to know that he will support the Constitution and its amendments.

// Dr. Jeff Widmeyer spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He and the others that are following the law with regard to their firearms are not the people that anybody needs to worry about. We are the safe ones and he is sure many in this room would be running towards the trouble and putting themselves in danger for it. The resolution may be symbolic and that is okay. He would Council to pass the symbol and let Richmond know Lynchburg opposes what they are trying to do. Council can reflect that they have listened to us and the majority that has shown up to voice their opinion is in favor of this even if it is just symbolic.

// Mr. Stephen Redmond spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He believes the guise that these laws are for public safety measures is false and it is setting a dangerous precedent. He is asking his local representatives take a stand alongside the over 100 other localities that have pledged to support and defend the Second Amendment. This is a polarizing issue and passions run high on both sides. When you look at the issue in terms of our rights as citizens of the United States and Virginia, it becomes rather simple. We live in a country that is clearly defined by the law of our Constitution. It is a short and simple principle that our right to bear arms shall not be infringed that our founders, particularly those from Virginia, fought to pass to everyone in this room.

// Mr. Jim Petrey spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He commented that the Voting Rights Act happened in 1965. It was almost a hundred years of trying to get the voting rights back to where our country thought it should be. The surrounding counties have had a chance to stand up for something by becoming Second Amendment sanctuary cities. By agreeing to support the Second Amendment, even though everyone does not agree on what it means, we are setting a precedent that people ever had. This will say that we support the Constitution and it will be a way to stand up for it.

// Mr. Don Good spoke in favor of the City becoming a Second Amendment sanctuary city. He commented that this country is the longest standing democracy or representative democracy in the history of the world because of our Constitution and because we have honored the Constitution. If we destroy the Constitution or interpret it as a living, breathing document, we will no longer be the nation that we have been. The Second Amendment is supposed to protect us from a tyrannical government. No one thought that Iran would become like it is today.

// Speakers from other localities were Mr. Patrick Moneta of Appomattox (in favor), Mr. Wes Gardner of Campbell County (in favor), Mr. Koddie Staples of Campbell County (in favor), Mr. Damian Miller of Bedford County (in favor), Mr. Damien Miller of Bedford County (in favor), Mr. Randy Mills of Campbell County (in favor), Mr. Isaiah Knight of Bedford County (in favor), Ms. Wendy Wilson of Bedford County (in favor), Mr. Robert Davies of Campbell County (in favor), Mr. Cody Wright of Campbell County (in favor), Mr. Travis Pool of Halifax County (in favor), Mr. Bo Traywick of Richmond (in favor), Mr. Benjamin Summers of Bedford County (in favor) and Ms. Neli Anderson of Bedford County (in favor).

// Mayor Tweedy closed the public speaker portion of the public hearing and the matter rests with Council.

Councilmember Helgeson made a motion to approve the resolution presented to Council to become a Second Amendment sanctuary city. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Perrow. Councilmember Helgeson said he was glad to see so many patriots and this was inspiring and encouraging. Our job is not to dissect the different bills and legislation but to represent the citizens. It is pretty clear that the citizens want them to put forward and vote for the Second Amendment sanctuary resolution. He hopes that the rest of Council will also vote in favor of this. You may not like guns or the issue but our job is to represent citizens and we heard pretty loud and clear what the citizens want. He thinks it makes sense constitutionally and let's represent them and vote for this.

// Councilmember Perrow had the following remarks. First, I want to thank everyone for attending tonight. This meeting has been long, there have been some unexpected modifications to it, and you have been stalwart in your participation. Thank you.

I am proud to second and support the resolution presented. I have heard from both sides of the arguments and have heard reasonable opinions both for and against this resolution, and I'd like to address those reasons against that I find compelling. Like you, I believe in the rule of law. If you didn't, you would not be here tonight; you would not have left any firearms in the car, and you would not have participated in this public process. It is the reason you are here. You, as law abiding citizens, will follow the laws passed by the Commonwealth. It is the reason you are so concerned about the proposed legislative action. [Frankly, if you planned to disregard the law, you wouldn't care about what laws they passed.] Yes, I'm sure any laws passed will face a significant legal challenge, which is also in keeping with the Constitution and our rule of law. This is what keeps our society functioning and not falling into anarchy.

There is an argument that this resolution does not fit the rule of law, and I agree with that argument. I acknowledge that the legal standing of this resolution is tenuous; however, this resolution, although somewhat flawed, is a clear and important symbol that has real meaning to many participants here tonight, most our my constituents in Ward IV, thousands of citizens of the City of Lynchburg, and to me, as an individual. I stand with you, I represent your interest, and I will engage in the debate, both legislative and legal, to prohibit the infringement of our 2nd amendment rights. This is a much broader issue than the 2nd Amendment. This is about the differences between urban and rural cultures.

This new legislative body has six leadership positions. One of the leaders lives in Portsmouth and the other five live in Fairfax. What concern or understanding do any of these leaders have for the City of Lynchburg or any area outside of northern Virginia? They would be shocked to hear that many rural school districts offer excused absences on the first day of hunting season, if the school isn't closed outright. I grew up in Amherst County, this is part of our culture and our identity, and those in power in Richmond appear to have no concern for it whatsoever.

What you are doing tonight is the correct approach. Appeal to your elected representatives, see if they align with your beliefs or not, and work to get representatives of our values into elected office. The way to do that is to show up and vote. Assist those in other districts who support your values. And, work hard to increase our turnout to offset the impact of urban northern Virginia.

Lastly, in a quote, frequently misattributed to Lincoln, made by Ulysses S. Grant at his first inaugural address on March 4, 1869: “I shall on all subjects have a policy to recommend, but none to enforce against the will of the people. Laws are to govern all alike—those opposed as well as those who favor them. I know no method to secure the repeal of bad or obnoxious laws so effective as their stringent execution.”

To our Commonwealth’s executive and legislative branches: you are getting ready to grab the tiger by the tail. I know of few issues that fuel such political emotions as this, are you sure you want to go down this path? Because if you do, you will mobilize a sleeping political force that will work tirelessly to unseat you in the next election.

// Councilmember Nelson had the following remarks. I greatly appreciate the messages received from all who advocate for the “2nd Amendment Sanctuary Resolution” and from those who oppose it. Constructive civic participation is so valuable. I have listened to all voices, read all messages, and applaud courteous civic advocacy.

My core instincts oppose any and all legislative restrictions on fundamental Constitutional liberties. I equally believe the liberties guaranteed by the “2nd Amendment” are as important as any other liberty guaranteed in the Bill of Rights to the U. S. Constitution. I agree with you about the value of firearms and their value in the hands of responsible citizens.

However, it is undeniable that reasonable limitations have repeatedly been imposed on each and all Constitutional liberties for more than two centuries.

For example; in writing the majority opinion of the 2008 *Heller* decision, referenced in this “2nd Amendment Sanctuary Resolution,” Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia recognized that limitations have been appropriately imposed on 2nd Amendment liberties. In that *Heller* opinion, Justice *Scalia* wrote:

“Like most rights, the right secured by the Second Amendment is not unlimited. From Blackstone through the 19th-century cases, commentators and courts routinely explained that the right was not a right to keep and carry any weapon whatsoever in any manner whatsoever and for whatever purpose. Nothing in our [court’s] opinion should be taken to cast doubt on long standing prohibitions on the possession of firearms by felons and the mentally ill, or laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in sensitive places such as schools and government buildings, or laws imposing conditions and qualification on the commercial sale of arms.”

Justice Scalia went on to state: “We also recognize another important limitation on the right to keep and carry arms. As we have explained, the sorts of weapons protected [by the 2nd Amendment] were those “in common use at the time.” [That] limitation is fairly supported by the historical tradition of prohibiting the carrying of “dangerous and unusual weapons.” - Justice Scalia.

The recitals in the 11th paragraph of this proposed “Sanctuary Resolution” declare that Lynchburg City Council expresses “opposition to any law that would *unconstitutionally restrict the right of citizens* of Lynchburg to keep and bear arms.”

And, this Sanctuary Resolution’s final declaration states: “Lynchburg City Council hereby declares its intent to oppose any infringement on the right of law-abiding citizens to keep and bear arms. . .”

So, the question is: If restrictions have been lawfully placed on the 2nd Amendment for centuries, who decides whether a new Virginia law unconstitutionally restricts or infringes on a law-abiding citizen’s right to keep and bear arms?

If a court decides that a new Virginia law's restriction on the 2nd Amendment's right to keep and bear arms is constitutional, then Lynchburg must enforce that new law. If a court decides that a new Virginia law's restriction on the 2nd Amendment is unconstitutional, then Lynchburg cannot enforce it. When courts determine the constitutionality of a law, then Lynchburg must follow the court's decisions.

So, if this resolution is merely symbolic and merely declares that Lynchburg respects court decisions, then this resolution is irrelevant and meaningless, since Lynchburg must and always will honor court decisions and cannot enforce a Virginia law that a court declares to be unconstitutional.

Or, if this Resolution is symbolic and merely intended to loudly and clearly "ask" Virginia state legislators and government leaders to not impose further restrictions on 2nd Amendment liberties, then this Resolution is not well written and needs revision.

But, from all appearances, this Resolution implies that *Lynchburg* has the authority to determine the constitutionality of any new Virginia law affecting the 2nd Amendment, and that *Lynchburg* can and will refuse to enforce any new Virginia law that *Lynchburg* decides to be unconstitutional. If that is the case, then this Resolution directly conflicts with the U.S. Constitution and Lynchburg's state corporate Charter.

Let us be reminded that Lynchburg is a subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia. As a subdivision of Virginia, Lynchburg must respect and enforce all Virginia laws unless and until a higher legal authority says it does not.

Virginia's Commonwealth's Attorneys and local Law Enforcement Officers have discretion to not prosecute a case or to not make an arrest if they conclude that the case or charge lacks merit. On the other hand, Lynchburg City Council does not have that blanket discretion when enforcing state laws. The City of Lynchburg has no legal authority to "categorically" ignore the laws of its sovereign,...the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Those who sincerely claim to honor the U. S. Constitution, as do most of you, must respect Article III of the U. S. Constitution, which designates the courts as the third branch of government, and delegates to the Courts the authority to resolve conflicts between any laws and the U.S. Constitution.

Alexander Hamilton emphasized this when he wrote "Federalist No. 78," and Chief Justice John Marshall confirmed it in the landmark decision of *Marbury vs. Madison*. If City Council were to enact a "2nd Amendment Sanctuary Resolution," that asserts that Lynchburg can determine the constitutionality of a Va. state law, we would ignore the primary mandate of Article III in the U.S. Constitution; that the courts have the ultimate authority to interpret the Constitution; NOT the President, NOT Congress, NOT state legislatures or state Governors; NOT County Boards of Supervisors, and most certainly NOT THE LYNCHBURG CITY COUNCIL.

If Lynchburg City Council were to adopt this Resolution, I believe we would *dishonor* and *disrespect* the U. S. Constitution's foremost principles, by claiming that a state locality has the authority to overrule the sovereignty of its own state.

Neither the "Founding Fathers" nor the authors of "The Federalist" recognized the authority of a locality to be superior to the authority and sovereignty of any state. Yet, that insubordination is what this "2nd Amendment Sanctuary Resolution" seems to propose.

Throughout my legal career, I have zealously advocated for the “Rule of Law” and for “Law and Order.” Yet, how do we respect the “Rule of Law” or promote “Law and Order” if every locality can pick and choose which laws each will comply with and which laws each will disobey? I think we cannot! Until and unless a court declares a Virginia law to be unconstitutional, then Lynchburg must respect and enforce that law.

I also point out that all Lynchburg City Council members took an oath, the effect being to obey laws of this Commonwealth. Each of us would violate our oath if we advocated for disobedience of State laws.

And personally, as an attorney-at-law, my own professional ethics prohibit me from advocating that anyone disobey a state law.

On a related note, this 2nd Amendment Sanctuary initiative imitates declarations made by some Virginia localities from 1958 and into the early 1960’s, when those localities adopted the infamous practice of “Massive Resistance” to laws requiring Virginia to racially integrate its public schools. Those acts of “nullification and interposition” were found to be unconstitutional. I think it just as unlawful for Lynchburg to adopt a similar policy of “massive resistance” and unilateral interposition to Virginia’s laws affecting firearms and the 2nd Amendment.

And finally, this City Council has a long-established policy of not passing resolutions on matters beyond City Council’s direct authority. These issues are beyond the authority of this City Council. Your voices should be directed to the ears of the General Assembly and Governor, not to City Council.

Therefore, if Lynchburg or any locality disputes a state law, it has two appropriate and lawful options: 1st - Ask the General Assembly to change the law or to repeal it, or 2nd – To litigate the issue in a court of law.

As for the first option, I supported that approach when we last met on December 10, 2019. That proposal, for City Council to amend its Legislative Agenda, was defeated 4-3. Still now, I would like for City Council to send that message to Richmond in our “Legislative Agenda.” City Council’s Rules prohibit a motion that has been defeated from being reconsidered within the short time period that has elapsed since that December meeting, unless a councilmember who voted in opposition of that motion asks that it be reconsidered. Since that may be very unlikely tonight, that first option seems moot.

Thus, Lynchburg’s only other option is to litigate the constitutionality of any new law once it is enacted, but I certainly would like to capture the video of tonight’s session and send it to each member of the General Assembly and to Governor Northam, so they and he can see, and hear, and feel the sentiments that have been expressed here tonight. However, for these reasons, I regret that I cannot support the motion as presented and am compelled to vote against the motion to approve this Resolution.

// Councilmember Wilder thanked all the citizens for coming tonight. We appreciate the voice and your voice has been heard. He wished to be clear that he believes everyone has the right to bear arms. He does not know enough about the legislation that has been proposed so he is not in a position to say he will support this resolution if he has not seen all the information coming from Richmond. He understands the points Councilmember Nelson made. He heard a gentleman say that some of the policies were racially based and made indications. When we talk about racial issues, it took it for him to another level. If we would like to talk about whether this is a racial issue or talk about racial issues, he has a whole list from economic to education to housing. He appreciates all of them coming out tonight. He appreciates being a member of this community and City Council. He respects all the

Councilmembers even though they may disagree sometimes. He respects all the people's voices as well. He cannot support the motion the way it is written.

// Councilmember Wright noted that his family has been in Lynchburg and the surrounding area for almost 340 years. Folks on both sides of his family own firearms. Councilmember Nelson laid out very well the legal constriction on City Council authority and our long standing practice not to engage in state and national debates over which we have no authority. The resolution, as presented, suggests that we think that we can arbitrate here in this room the constitutionality of whatever passes in Richmond, which is not the case. It is important, of course, that we voice our opinions to folks in Richmond, to the governor, to our members of Congress. That is as it should and the way the system is designed to work. He will be doing this and he hopes they will too. He is grateful for everyone that came out this evening.

// Vice Mayor Dolan expressed appreciation for so many citizens coming out to share their thoughts and concerns regarding this issue. This is a serious issue for sure. She is concerned, however, that if Lynchburg City Council adopts formal action on this matter, it will set a dangerous precedent of distracting our attention and dividing our community on a number of issues over which we have no local governing body jurisdiction. Were we to pass this resolution we would open the door to petitioners to ask us to weigh in on matters about which we have no legal standing and no authority to act. Should we have a public hearing on impeaching the President? Should we have a public hearing on abortion rights? On marijuana legalization? She does not diminish the point of view of those who want a sanctuary city; however, she still believes that this conversation belongs at the state and national level. Our General Assembly and the U.S. Congress have a long history of protecting citizens on the Second Amendment as a fundamental right. These bodies interpret the Constitution as they write and pass laws. Local law enforcement will be and must be guided by these laws. We also must remember we are a Dillon state. Our local government has limited authority to pass laws. Our highest priority is to attend to the needs of our citizens within the power that we are authorized to act. Any discussion of state or federal issues over which we have no legislative control serves only to set ourselves against one another needlessly and to detract ourselves from our ability to best serve our local citizens. Thank you all for coming tonight and for your participation.

// Mayor Tweedy thanked everyone for coming out to express their opinions. She thanked the councilmembers as well. Passions and opinions run high on both sides of the debate. When voices are equal on the issue or there comes a time when you must weigh both perspectives, as councilmembers or leaders, you have to then reach within your own decision making process and perspective and represent the right thing that you know to do for your City. We all have our background and experiences that we bring to this debate. I am an American citizen. I am a woman of color. I am a caretaker, a mother and grandmother and the only veteran on City Council. I am a concealed weapon carrier. I am a gun advocate and a child of the Most High. So I think I check many boxes in this discussion tonight. I have been serving my country and my community since I was 17 years old when I entered the U.S. Navy voluntarily. She and another veteran disagreed recently at an event but agreed to disagree on this topic. She has been a volunteer servant and leader in the community for the past 12 years. She has no problem listening to citizens and varying perspectives. She is an at large councilmember and represents citizens throughout Lynchburg, a city of 82,000 people. Many have sent them emails, phone calls, letters or come up to them personally. She will defer her

comments to Councilmember Nelson's comments, which were thorough, complete and represented previous history for Councils. We have a quality of life here and we are prospering and people can see themselves and their families, businesses and organizations being a part of. She wants to continue the progress and is going to make the decisions that she believes will prosper our City and residents, listening to the perspectives of others. She expects everyone to share their views and perspectives around this issue with our legislators in Richmond, Representatives Byron and Walker, Senators Newman and Peake. She expects City Council to continue handling the business that makes our City a great place for people to call home and she will not be supporting the motion.

// The motion failed by the following vote:

Ayes:	Helgeson, Perrow	2
Noes:	Dolan, Nelson, Tweedy, Wilder, Wright	5

// The meeting was adjourned at 1:47 a.m.

Clerk of Council