

**DURHAM CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
Thursday, January 6, 2022 @ 1:00 p.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING**

The Durham City Council held a regular Work Session on the above date and time virtually via Zoom with the following members present: Mayor Elaine O'Neal, Mayor Pro Tempore Mark-Anthony Middleton and Council Members Javiera Caballero, DeDreana Freeman, Charlie Reece and Leonardo Williams. Absent: None.

Also present: City Manager Wanda Page, Deputy City Attorney Don O'Toole and City Clerk Diana Schreiber.

[CALL TO ORDER]

Mayor Elaine O'Neal called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the virtual Work Session.

Mayor O'Neal requested a moment of silence related to one year ago, the Insurrection that occurred at the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C.

[ANNOUNCEMENTS BY COUNCIL]

Mayor O'Neal asked her colleagues if they had any announcements.

Council Member Reece spoke to the current wave of the Omicron variant of COVID-19, positivity rate and seven day moving average, support for vaccinations/boosters, protective measures (mask wearing, social distancing) and testing resources for additional information www.takemyshot.nc.gov or call 919-913-8088. He emphasized that the virus was dangerous especially to those persons with underlying health conditions; encouraged everyone to get vaccinated and boosted; and urged patronizing local businesses safely with special mention of ordering take out and utilizing curb side service. He also encouraged everyone to get tested if symptomatic or having been in contact with someone with COVID; wear masks indoors and in public; and upgrade to N95 or KN95 masks. To schedule or walk up free testing call 877-562-4850 or go to El Centro Hispano and Durham County Human Service Building.

Mayor O'Neal announced she would be meeting with Public Health Director Rodney Jenkins, Durham Chair of County Commissioners and other local health experts next week, January 10, 2022 to discuss Omicron's impact.

Council Member Johnson addressed the lack of consequences of individuals who participated in the January 6, 2021 incident and expressed concerns about the future related to free and fair elections; urged fighting for voting rights and fair

districts; referenced a grant item on the agenda for High Intensity Drug Trafficking Program with local Police and Federal Drug Enforcement; spoke to the War on Drugs and its impact on an entire generation of black and brown people with mass incarceration; and referenced the failed public policy of marijuana possession; and encouraged lobbying at state and federal levels for changes in drug approaches that put treatment and intervention at the top of the list and removed enforcement, incarceration and punishment.

Mayor O'Neal spoke to her experiences on the bench, seeing firsthand the impact of the legal system on families stemming from substance abuse; supported drug courts and their successes; and admitted certain public policies had been detrimental and the resulting societal consequences had been worse than the criminal punishment.

Council Member Williams stated DPS was recruiting educators of color and had a program underway called the DREAM (Diverse and Resilient Educators Advisory Mentorship) Program; referenced the January 6, 2021 incident in Washington, DC and urged support for democracy; encourage all to get vaccinated, boosted and if necessary, tested; and supported the continued patronage of local businesses during the pandemic.

Council Member Williams planned to highlight local small businesses at the next Council Meeting.

Mayor O'Neal urged all to be vaccinated and boosted to ensure safety of others.

Mayor Pro Tempore Middleton appreciated the remarks made related January 6, 2021 at the US Capitol and expressed gratitude for those who held the line; spoke in support of being an American elected official; and addressed the fragility of democracy. He also appreciated the Mayor's leadership in protecting residents during the pandemic and the appreciated the continuing partnership with Durham County.

Council Member Freeman spoke to all having access to protective supplies, spoke to bulk free supplies at ReadyOp website <https://nc.readyop.com/fs/4ckj/d483> and acknowledged the work being done around the airport in association with the Federal Transit Administration and the city's Transportation Department.

Council Member Caballero thanked her colleagues for their remarks.

Mayor O'Neal announced the National Conference of Mayors were meeting in Washington DC January 19th, she stated that she was planning on attending and might request excused absence(s) while at the Mayors' Conference, she would follow up on the exact dates.

[PRIORITY ITEMS OF THE CITY MANAGER, ATTORNEY AND CLERK]

City Manager Page requested the following priority items:

Item 27) Interlocal Agreement with Durham County for a COVID-19 Testing Facility. Requested that Council make a motion to suspend the rules and vote on the Supplemental Item.

Item 25) Contract Amendment No. 3 for ST-301C, Paving Services 2020. Added as a Supplemental Item.

Item 26) Police and Fire Compensation Plans Adjustment. Added as a Supplemental Item and would involve a 30-minute presentation by Human Resources.

MOTION by Council Member Caballero, seconded by Council Member Williams, to accept the City Manager's Priority Items was approved at 1:37 p.m. by the following vote: Ayes: Mayor O'Neal, Mayor Pro Tempore Middleton and Council Members Caballero, Freeman, Johnson, Reece and Williams. Noes: None. Absences: None.

Taking the prerogative of the Chair, Mayor O'Neal announced the next item was Item 27.

SUBJECT: INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH DURHAM COUNTY FOR A COVID-19 TESTING FACILITY (ITEM 27/ PR 15175)

MOTION by Council Member Williams, seconded by Council Member Freeman, to suspend the rules in order to vote was approved at 1:38 p.m. by the following vote: Ayes: Mayor O'Neal, Mayor Pro Tempore Middleton and Council Members Caballero, Freeman, Johnson, Reece and Williams. Noes: None. Absences: None.

MOTION by Council Member Reece, seconded by Council Member Johnson, to approve the interlocal agreement with Durham County for a COVID-19 Testing Facility was approved at 1:39 p.m. by the following vote: Ayes: Mayor O'Neal, Mayor Pro Tempore Middleton and Council Members Caballero, Freeman, Johnson, Reece and Williams. Noes: None. Absences: None.

Council Member Caballero remarked that the approved item was essential in the fight against the Omicron variant; Latin19, collaborative group, had been meeting on Wednesdays at noon via Zoom since the beginning of the pandemic (comprised of public health officials, pediatricians, front line health care workers, etc.) and asked what Durham needed to be doing in regard to testing, free access to good masks in schools/public transport/day cares/businesses and supported extending the lapsed contract to fund community health workers.

Mayor O'Neal requested additional information on the community health worker program.

Council Member Caballero spoke to the six-month contract, co-funded with Durham County, for a vaccine equity program active in Durham's communities of color that utilized health ambassadors. She noted the contract had ended but that it needed to be re-funded by the city and county.

Council Member Freeman announced the African-American COVID Taskforce had been meeting throughout the pandemic on Tuesdays at noon since March 2020, with the support of Duke University and Durham County and local churches. Free supplies were available locally and from the state.

Mayor Pro Tempore Middleton appreciated the remarks of his colleagues regarding the local health ambassador program in communities of color; and supported the extension of the health ambassadors' contract.

Mayor O'Neal continued through the agenda under the heading of Priority Items, asking the City Attorney and Clerk for their items.

Deputy City Attorney O'Toole stated the City Attorney's Office had no priority items.

City Clerk Schreiber requested that the Clerk be permitted to initiate a discussion related to Council travel and training allotments; and requested follow-up on the Clerk's Priority Item on December 21, 2021 related to Council-appointed advisory boards, committees, commissions and taskforces meeting in person or virtually.

MOTION by Council Member Freeman, seconded by Council Member Johnson, to accept the City Clerk's Priority Items was approved at 1:53 p.m. by the following vote: Ayes: Mayor O'Neal, Mayor Pro Tempore Middleton and Council Members Caballero, Freeman, Johnson, Reece and Williams. Noes: None. Absences: None.

Mayor O'Neal addressed the first Clerk Priority Item related to Council's Travel and Training allotments.

Mayor Pro Tempore Middleton addressed the background involved in the reduction of travel/training allocations for Council from 2019 to their current level; noted the impact of the pandemic on the city's budget was not as significant as anticipated; and urged the restoration of the travel budget to pre-COVID levels immediately and into the next budget cycle.

Council Member Reece added that conversations transpired during the lull of the pandemic and was supportive of restoring the regular travel/training budget.

Deputy City Attorney O'Toole summarized that if Council agreed to restore the travel/training funding, then the funds could be reinstated.

Council Member Johnson clarified the travel budget's allowable uses to include volunteer appreciate for boards, committees, commissions and taskforce members for such items as meals; and noted that a listing of uses was available in Council Procedures.

Council Member Caballero was supportive of the restoration of funding.

Council Member Freeman was supportive and urged review of the listing to fit current times.

Council Member Williams appreciated the restoration of funding that he was currently using for professional development and learning.

It was the consensus of Council to restore the travel and training funding balances to the non-reduced level (2019).

City Manager Page noted that the administration would make a budget adjustment for the current fiscal year in the amount of \$31,000 and as staff prepared for FY22-23, would anticipate the restored amount to be noted as the base budget.

Mayor O'Neal introduced the second Clerk Priority Item of Council board, committee, commission and taskforce (BCCT) meetings to be held in-person or virtual during Omicron by boards that required in-person meetings.

Council Member Caballero reflected on remarks from NIS staff related to the Housing Appeals Board process and urged, with the members' support, that they be allowed to meet in person; indicated the BCCT survey demonstrated that volunteers were most comfortable meeting virtually; and spoke to the 5% Positivity Metric as mentioned via email by Durham County Health Director Rodney Jenkins. She also noted the consequences of the HAB not meeting were dire.

Council Member Freeman appreciated the measures provided by Health Director Jenkins and urged that the BCCTs be allowed to meet that required in-person meetings.

Council Member Johnson requested to hear from staff that supported boards that best functioned in-person, to fulfill their necessary obligations.

Faith Gardner, Assistant Director of NIS, noted that the Housing Appeals Board met in the Fall 2021; stated there were cases on the docket this month and

intended to find another larger venue for meetings to ensure safety measures; and would follow Council's lead and could meet on a month to month basis.

Council Member Johnson did not feel qualified to make a judgment that indoor meetings were currently safe and was torn in knowing that some apartment residents were living in apartments not getting fixed due to landlords who were not responding to HAB cases.

Mayor O'Neal spoke to posing various questions to the experts at the upcoming meeting with health advisors on January 10th. She encouraged Council to send their questions to her so that they could be asked that day.

Council Member Caballero would circulate a document for Council to add their questions to it for Mayor O'Neal.

After additional discussion, Mayor O'Neal requested Council forward their questions regarding in-person meetings to her and she would ask them to the community health experts at the Monday, January 10th meeting; it was the consensus of Council to have Mayor Pro Tem Middleton attend the meeting.

Depending on the responses by the health experts, would determine the direction for in-person meetings.

[CONSENT AGENDA]

Mayor O'Neal read the agenda items printed on the agenda and asked if Council wanted to pull any items for additional discussion.

Council Member Johnson inquired about the number of individuals appointed to the Racial Equity Commission.

This question was addressed later in the meeting under the Board, Committee, Commission and Taskforce report by the City Clerk.

Items 15 and 24 were pulled for additional discussion; Item 26 was a presentation.

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT RESPONSE TO BULL CITY TENANTS UNITED PROPOSALS (ITEM 15/ PR 15162)

Constance Stancil, Director of the Neighborhood Improvement Services (NIS) and NIS Assistant Director of Code Enforcement & Impact Team Faith Gardner, responded to Council's questions.

Director Stancil presented the staff report.

Assistant Director Gardner provided an overview of responses to proposals by Bull City Tenants United, including context of code enforcement data. The Inspection data request from Dec 21, 2021 Work Session voiced various statistics related to inspection cases and compliance rates.

NIS RESPONSE to BCTU proposals

Director of NIS Constance Stancil made the following remarks.

The NIS Department uses a Community-centered and people focused approach to administering enforcement of the City Quality of Life Ordinances with an intentional focus on compliance to ensure all Durham residents live in safe, healthy homes and neighborhoods. Durham was one of the first City's in the state to establish a formal Compliance agreement which allowed NIS staff to work with property owners to bring their properties in compliance as soon as possible. One of the first Cities to have code enforcement officers to do neighborhood canvassing and outreach to engage and educate residents the city codes and services.

Over the past 19 years, staff have worked in partnership with a number of community partners: from city council members, community organizations to residents and housing advocates.

NIS staff have worked very closely with former Council woman Lorisa Siebel, former Council member and State Senator Mike Woodward, Mayor Bell, Mayor Schewel when he was a council member went to the General Assembly with us to lobby to keep the Proactive Rental Inspection program in place.

NIS staff have partnered with the PACs, NECD Leadership Council, Rev. Page and many other ministers, Reinvestment Partners, PEACH, and Numerous housing advocates and residents. And staff always have the support that we need our City Attorney's office.

When the Proactive Rental Inspection program began in 2012 Durham CAN members partnered with us to inspect large apartment complexes and single-family rentals with Spanish speaking residents.

In mid-2021, staff were contacted by the NC Congress of Latino Organizations to partner with them to assist with inspections at rental properties that have Spanish speaking tenants. The NC Congress of Latino Organizations wanted to know what they could do assist staff with legislative changes at the General Assembly. Non-profits continue to work with staff in service to Spanish speaking residents. Staff worked with community residents and partners whenever possible.

There was a Neighborhood Preservation Program which allowed staff to with low-income homeowners to repairs homes that have code violations. Resources were required to continue the program.

Staff leadership emphasized that staff took the work seriously as it directly impacted the quality of life for Durham residents. The City of Durham has excellent employees. NIS staff volunteer their time and resources to assist residents in improving residents' homes and neighborhoods.

Ms. Gardner, NIS Assistant Director over Code Enforcement and the Impact Team, shared the NIS response to Bull City Tenant Untied proposals and provided an overview of the City's responses to Bull City Tenants United Proposals including some context regarding Code Enforcement activities.

Inspections data was summarized.

There was a reduction in numbers for the year's 2020 and 2021. This was due to a combination of pandemic conditions and staffing vacancies.

Detailed the average number of inspections over the previous 4 fiscal years was 12,999 per year.

The number of inspections reflected workload. There were usually multiple inspections for an individual case. The number of cases these inspections relate to are:

§ FY 2019 - 6937 cases (Housing = 2726, Nuisance = 4211)

§ FY 2020 - 6305 cases (Housing = 2939, Nuisance = 3366)

§ FY 2021 - 4049 cases (Housing = 1052, Nuisance = 2997)

o Overall compliance rate previous to the pandemic averages 81.6% which is above the national average. (FY 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20)

In the document, NIS Responses to BCTU Proposals there were overarching considerations followed by information relevant to each BCTU proposal. The BCTU proposals and department responses fall into 4 main areas:

1. Requests for Alterations to inspection services and processes
2. Proposed modifications to the City's Housing Code
3. Proposed expansion of the use of the Emergency Repair process
4. Proposed modifications to the City's Non-Discrimination Ordinance

For each item staff provided the department's Current Level of Service, a list of considerations was pertinent, and some recommendations and/or possible actions to take if the proposal was something the Council would like for NIS to pursue. In several areas the first action to take would be research. This, of course, would require additional resources, as staff did not have staff capacity for those efforts.

There were three overarching contexts of:

1. State and Federal laws and guidelines enable the City's code and ordinances and past and recent changes to state statutes that have impacted Code Enforcement strategies.
2. Code Enforcement's goal of safe and healthy homes for Durham's residents and the sound approach of our focus on compliance and engagement rather than punitive actions.
3. The pressures and effects of the current real estate market realities on Durham's naturally occurring affordable housing stock.

After the presentation, Council Member Johnson inquired about the request for a new full-time employee and referred to the NIS memo in the packet.

A new Spanish speaking code enforcement officer was being requested. Ms. Gardner spoke to accommodations made outside of normal business hours and stated that if Council provided direction for specific suggestions, then the suggestions would become recommendations.

Ms. Gardner addressed updating the Housing Code revisions which was a regular process but that staffing shortages were delaying the process.

Director Stancil acknowledged there had been door to door efforts prior to COVID around code enforcement education, related to treating single occupancy homes and rentals the same.

Council Member Johnson spoke to prioritizing proactive rental inspection programs; supported emergency repair programs; wanted Durham residents to have access to safe, healthy and affordable housing and thanked staff.

Council Member Freeman intended to reach out to Bull City Tenants United after the meeting for further discussions on the Tenants Bill of Rights and suggested future discussions occur at NE Central Durham Committee.

Mayor Pro Tempore Middleton appreciated his colleagues' advocacy about affordable housing and tenants' rights; complimented the NIS staff's mission/drive; and asked if staff could recommend parts of BCTU proposals.

Ms. Gardner addressed the proposals and noted that they consisted of issues that had been occurring for years; spoke to legal roadblocks and financial limitations but appreciated the document.

Director Stancil spoke to building efficiencies in the current NIS system; shortening correspondence, reducing time for certain processes and outreach to community groups.

Council Member Caballero urged NIS staff to bring their requests for resources to Council; expressed support for bilingual and high use language staffing; and requested timelines on recommendations.

Council Member Reece stepped away from the meeting at 3:22 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tempore Middleton expressed support for multi-lingual staffing and was not prepared to focus all efforts on the proposal.

Council Member Freeman suggested that a sub-committee of Council take up the topic to discuss and appreciated the work of NIS staff related to housing.

Council Member Johnson stated that if Council wanted the decisions to move forward, then they would need to direct staff; and encouraged feedback/next steps from her colleagues about which policies in which to move forward.

Mayor Pro Tempore Middleton would consider some of the proposals in the upcoming budget process.

Mayor O'Neal announced there were speakers to the item.

Tim Stallman, representing BCTU Policy Team and member of Affordable Housing Implementation Committee, noted there had been an uptick of evictions by referencing the Braswell Apartment situation; and referenced five specific areas.

Lee Gans, representing BCTU Policy Team, echoed Mr. Stallman's comments about appreciating staff work; urged the passing of a strong ordinance; indicated that landlords' rights were stronger than tenants' rights as per state law; and spoke to various enforcement mechanisms.

Mayor O'Neal explained that North Carolina was a Dillon's Rule State, with state law preempting local laws; and spoke about her experiences on the Community Life Court related to landlord activities relating to bringing their units up to code. Mayor also spoke to demands received from BCTU of staff and Council.

Council Member Williams addressed the Braswell Apartment situation and the support being provided; and wanted to know what local government could realistically do within the current statutory constraints.

Council Members Johnson, Williams and Freeman volunteered to participate on the Council working group to discuss the housing topic, using the proposal as a beginning point. Council Member Caballero was willing to participate.

Mayor O'Neal favored having tenants and landlords at the table.

Council Member Freeman spoke to NECD as the venue to discuss the topic.

Mayor O'Neal called for a break from 4:10 p.m. to 4:20 p.m.

Lorisa Seibel, speaker, thanked Council for bringing its members together to speak about housing; and requested to sit-in on the meetings.

Council Member Freeman acknowledged the NECD meeting had no agenda but could address the topic and would discuss the meeting schedule at this evening's meeting.

Deputy City Attorney O'Toole inquired about the NECD at 5 pm, asking how many Council Members would be attending.

Council Member Freeman noted that the 5 pm NECD meeting had been noticed and that any number of council members could attend.

Council Member Johnson requested clarity on the topic of the 5 pm NECD meeting.

Mayor Pro Tempore Middleton stated the NECD meeting was not the appropriate forum to discuss the topic and encouraged setting a future meeting to address housing and tenants' rights.

Deputy Attorney O'Toole asked if a new committee was being formed or was the existing NECD Committee being charged with taking on this forum; and asked if tonight's meeting was noticed to the public, and if so, it would be important to know the topics on the notice.

Mayor O'Neal balanced the sense of urgency with the sense of order; and did not want to recreate a group and asked for legal counsel.

Deputy Attorney O'Toole summarized two questions:

1. Could Council discuss future meeting dates at the NECD meeting.

2. Did Council want to delegate to existing NECD committee the idea of whether they wanted the existing committee to morph into a new mission; or did Council want to make a new committee right now.

After further discussion, Council Member Johnson proposed to work over email to find a date for a meeting of the Council sub-committee to address tenants' rights, landlord relations and housing.

Council Member Williams concurred with his colleague's proposal and urged Council Member Caballero to attend.

It was the consensus of Council for Council Member Johnson to collect dates for a meeting of the Council sub-committee on housing matters.

SUBJECT: SOUTH ELLERBE RESTORATION PROJECT PHASE 2 – SITE DEMOLITION & MASS GRADING (SP-2021-02) (ITEM 24/ PR 15136)

Megan Walsh, representing the Public Works Department, presented the staff report and was available to answer Council's questions.

Council Member Caballero was pleased to see the project moving forward.

Council Member Freeman addressed the MUBE goals and what did the good faith effort look like.

Ms. Walsh responded 19% goals with WBE goals and the good faith effort was completed.

Eric Miller, Contracting and Compliance staff person, provided a review of the good faith effort and thresholds met; and explained how the effort was documented.

Joel Miller, principal of Buckeye Elm Contracting, addressed the good faith process in Phase 2 and the excavation/transportation/disposals of impacted soils; and noted the city was going to pay for the disposal directly. Of 21% of the contract total, 19% local MWBE was handling the trucking; and explained that calls were made to local MWBEs, of which, were not interested or did not provide a proposal.

Council Member Freeman spoke to ramifications of the contracting on MUBE and WBE goals; and spoke to the process of adding to the contracting list online.

[PRESENTATION]

**SUBJECT: POLICE AND FIRE COMPENSATION PLANS ADJUSTMENT
(ITEM 26/ PR 15171)**

John 'JJ' Scott, Interim Human Resources Director; and Alethea Hardy, Manager of Compensation and Classification; presented a recommendation to make a mid-year adjustment to the sworn police and fire pay plans with the goal of aligning the city's pay structures with the current market; the development of the plan sought to balance market data with the need to maintain internal equity; the resulting plan represents a significant investment in public safety and gives a solid structure to build on for the future.

The presentation consisted of the following;

Current Issues

- High turnover, difficulty recruiting, high number of vacancies

About Sworn Pay Plans

- Structure Adjustments with market adjustment
- Performance Based Step Movement

From 2017 to current, there had been no structure adjustments only performance based movements (except in 2020, no perf based movement)

On June 19, 2021: structure adjustment to Police by 4%, Fire by 3.5%; plus, employees received 4% Police and 3.5% Fire Market adjustment; bonuses awarded for effective performance

Process & Findings of the Market Study

Reviewed 13 municipalities

Data collected on all ranks: Police average lag of 12%; Fire, 10% lag

Recommendation:

Adjust rank minimums based on market analysis and internal equity alignment of ranks within public safety

Maintain 5% pay stpes within salary ranges

Police recruits adjusted by 10.6%

Fire recruits adjusted by 14.3%

Other ranks – adjustments guided by market and equity alignment

If approved, effective 1-18-2022, applied to 1/28 paychecks amounting to:

Estimated costs of \$4,007,034

Step Chart (displayed)

- Proposed Police Pay Plan
- Proposed Fire Pay Plan

Market Comparisons Graphs: PD & Fire

Next Steps

Market Adjustment

Merit Increases of 5%

Monitor staffing issues/make recommendations

City Manager Page addressed the HR team assembled to create the pay plan adjustment; and explained that the increases were needed and that funding was possible based on vacancies.

Council Member Caballero appreciated the presentation; and estimated the costs at \$4 million for ½ year then the necessity of allocating \$8 million for each budget cycle moving forward; and that the salaries reflected base pay increases, not other incentives/bonuses.

Interim Director Scott indicated that the amount was closer to \$9.5 million per year at current staffing levels.

Council Member Johnson addressed raising the fire fighter levels to reflect the City of Durham's livable wage for the 56 hours they were expected to work. Interim Director Scott spoke to the ordinance in force and that a memo would be updated and sent to Council reflective of the 56 hour/total cost. He also spoke to the issue of upward compression.

City Manager Page spoke to going from 40 to 56 hour pay weeks which would be significant and indicated that staff could calculate the numbers but would not recommend that type of adjustment.

Council Member Caballero departed the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tempore Middleton thanked staff for the report.

Mayor O'Neal stated there were speakers to the item.

Meredith Carter, Durham Firefighter, supported fair and competitive pay plans for firefighters that would improve morale in the department; and stated the zero step would be in effect without reflecting years of service and asked that the pay steps reflect years of service and experience.

Jimie Wright, President of the Professional Firefighters of Durham, explained that Durham had historically earned less than other department but had better benefits, but that this no longer was true; noted that training had expanded from three months to twelve; and urged an adjustment be made to reflect the continued education requirements.

Council Member Williams could relate with the comments about professional salaries for new employees in the teaching field; and called out numerous firefighters and police officers with commendations and thanked them for their service.

Interim Director Scott acknowledged the voiced concerns and would include information into the response memo.

Council Member Freeman addressed compression occurring in approximately the fourth year and supported merit increases over the past two years but they have not been awarded due to budgetary reasons.

Mayor Pro Tempore Middleton stated all Council members supported merit increases; thanked staff for discussing the compression issues and wanted every firefighter to know this was a beginning and that Council was serious about making Durham the number one place to work.

Interim Director Scott stated the issues were real, were not limited to the Fire Department since the issues were also recognized in Police and the entire organization. Staff would continue working on the issue and provide Council context.

The Police and Fire Compensation Plans Adjustment would be on the January 18, 2022 agenda.

The Clerk's board, committee, commission and taskforce report followed.

Assistant Clerk Paola Roland responded to Council Member Johnson's inquiry about the appointment process related to Item 7) Racial Equity Commission; she indicated that there were five individuals appointed to the Racial Equity Commission in October 18, 2021 Council Meeting; on November 1, 2021 Easmond Codjoe was appointed (the 6th appointment slot); and today, Council nominated Girija Mahajan for appointment, Council's last appointment slot.

Council Member Johnson had reached out to Durham County and noted that the County was processing their appointments and that the Commission would be ready to start soon.

City Clerk Schreiber updated Council on their nominations for boards, committees, commissions and taskforces:

Carolina Theatre of Durham Board of Trustees – appointment: Josephine Davis;
Durham Affordable Housing Implementation Committee- appointment: Kyle W Bostelman;

Durham City-County Appearance Commission – Appointment: Thomas J Flynn;
Durham Homeless Services Advisory Committee- Appointment, representing Faith Community: Jenise Washington;

Mayor's Council for Women – Appointment, representing Fair Housing Economic Development Sector: Sheena Mathews;

Participatory Budgeting Steering Committee – Appointment, representing At-Large Resident: Axel Herrera Ramos; and,
Recreation Advisory Commission – Appointment: Girija Mahajan

Council Member Reece returned to the meeting at 5:42 p.m.

[SETTLING THE AGENDA FOR THE JANUARY 18, 2022 CITY COUNCIL MEETING]

City Manager Page requested the following items be included in settling the agenda for the Tuesday, January 18, 2022 City Council Meeting by announcing the items for the Consent Agenda as Items 1 through 26.

MOTION by Council Member Williams, seconded by Council Member Reece, to approve the settling of the City Manager's agenda of the Tuesday, January 18, 2022 regular Council Meeting at 5:45 p.m. by the following vote: Ayes: Mayor O'Neal, Mayor Pro Tempore Middleton and Council Members Freeman, Johnson, Reece and Williams. Noes: None. Excused Absence: Council Member Caballero.

After discussion about the status of the NECD Committee, the question of whether the Committee could be disbanded emerged.

It was the consensus of Council to request the City Attorney's Office to research how to disband NECD.

Being no additional business to transact, Mayor O'Neal adjourned the Work Session at 5:48 p.m.

Diana Schreiber, NCCMC, CMC, MPA
City Clerk