

Work Session Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was held in Council Chambers on Monday, August 24, 2026. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

Present:

Mayor: Todd J. Nock

Council Members: M. Hall, C. Marshall, S. Tull, D. Downing, B. Cottman

City Manager: Brandy Matthews

Attorney: Andrew Illuminati

Administrative Assistant: Shelia Jackson

CALL TO ORDER

The Mayor and Council Work Session of the Pocomoke City Mayor and Council was called to order at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, August 24, 2026 by Mayor Nock.

Mayor Nock opened the meeting and advised those present that the Work Session would be conducted as a discussion-based meeting and that no formal votes would be taken. Mayor Nock explained that matters on the agenda would be addressed through discussion, consideration, and consensus, as appropriate. Mayor Nock welcomed all those in attendance and proceeded with the scheduled agenda.

Presentation on the Community Impact Grant Program

City Manager Brandy Matthews and Amanda Russell presented an overview of the City's Community Impact Grant Program and the applications received to date. Ms. Russell reported that, as of the date of the meeting, the City had received 12 grant applications, with nine applications recommended for funding. The total amount requested through the applications was reported as \$108,244.85, while the total funding recommendation presented to the Mayor and Council was \$84,996.85. Approximately \$100,000 was available for the grant program. Based on the recommendations presented, approximately \$15,003.15 would remain available. Ms. Russell explained that the applications were being reviewed in the order in which they were received and were evaluated according to the City's established grant criteria.

Alpha Youth Leadership Academy - The first application discussed was submitted by the Delta Omicron Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity in connection with Pocomoke Middle School. The project, titled Alpha Youth Leadership Academy, requested \$10,000, with staff recommending the full \$10,000 award. The proposed project was scheduled to begin in November 2026 and conclude in March 2027. The program would serve approximately 45 to 60 students and would focus on youth development, public health and wellness, and education. The program would pair students with adult mentors and include a basketball academy operating twice weekly. Grant funds would be used for program materials, participant incentives, food, enrichment and basketball equipment, and guest speakers. The Mayor and Council questioned the proposed \$2,500 in participant incentives. Staff clarified that the incentives would include participant T-shirts, recognition items, certificates, and completion awards. The anticipated outcomes included increased student engagement and connection to school, improved leadership, communication, teamwork, and self-confidence, support for positive behavior, and consistent access to mentors. The Mayor and Council expressed general support for the proposed grant. Following discussion, a consensus was reached to proceed with the proposed grant.

Worcester County Child Advocacy Center - The next application discussed was from the Worcester County Child Advocacy Center for the Pocomoke Child Advocacy Center Access, Safety, and Family Support Project. The organization requested \$8,000, with staff recommending the full amount. The project would begin upon notification of the award and was expected to be completed by June 2027. Staff explained that the project

aligned with public health and wellness, public safety, and violence prevention. The organization provides forensic interviews and related services to children and families and conducts community outreach in Pocomoke City. The proposed expenditures included forensic interview and technology improvements, childcare and caregiver environment improvements, community outreach, and direct family stabilization assistance. The anticipated outcomes included improved technology and service capacity, a more trauma-informed environment for children and caregivers, increased community awareness and outreach, direct stabilization assistance for families experiencing immediate barriers, and improved access to local Child Advocacy Center services. The Mayor and Council expressed general support for the proposed grant. Following discussion, a consensus was reached to proceed with the proposed grant.

Samaritan Ministries / Samaritan Shelter - The Mayor and Council then discussed the application submitted by **Samaritan Ministries** for support of the Samaritan Shelter. Mayor Nock expressed strong concern about placing the Samaritan Shelter in the same competitive grant process as other organizations. Mayor Nock stated that the Samaritan Shelter is a longstanding and vital community resource and expressed the opinion that the City should provide direct financial support to the organization rather than requiring it to compete annually for grant funding. Mayor Nock specifically discussed the shelter's role in providing overnight shelter, meals, resources, and assistance to individuals in need and stated that the organization should be treated similarly to other longstanding community organizations that receive direct City support. Council members discussed whether removing the Samaritan Shelter from the grant program would make the \$10,000 available for another applicant. Staff confirmed that doing so could free the amount for another organization and noted that there were four additional applications outstanding. Staff also advised that any change from grant funding to a direct City donation would need to be handled appropriately within the City's budget. Mayor Nock requested that Ms. Russell continue with the presentation concerning Samaritan Ministries so that the Mayor and Council could fully understand the organization's community impact. Ms. Russell reported that the Samaritan Shelter serves 61 individuals, including approximately 22 Pocomoke residents. The organization distributes approximately 9,385 bags of food through its food pantry and provides approximately 3,794 meals through its soup kitchen to Pocomoke residents. The shelter also provides approximately 10,491 meals to shelter residents. The proposed grant expenditures included food and meal supplies, bedding and linens, hygiene and personal care supplies, cleaning and sanitation supplies, client transportation assistance, emergency client assistance, and shelter safety and facility supplies. The anticipated outcomes included providing emergency shelter and housing, assisting with basic needs, providing daily meals and hygiene items, transportation assistance, increasing access to case management and supportive services, assisting individuals with transitions toward stable housing and self-sufficiency, and strengthening community coordination. The Mayor and Council discussed the distinction between a grant and a direct donation. It was noted that a direct City donation could provide the organization with documented City support while potentially avoiding some of the restrictions associated with grant funding. Mayor Nock reiterated that the City should continue supporting the Samaritan Shelter because of the extensive services it provides to the community and expressed the opinion that the organization should not have to compete annually for funding necessary to continue its basic operations. Council members also discussed the budget implications and the possibility of providing the organization with a direct donation while continuing to utilize the Community Impact Grant Program for other organizations. Following discussion, the Mayor and Council reached a consensus to provide a direct donation.

We Are Limitless Studios, LLC - The Mayor and Council received a presentation regarding the We Are Limitless Studios, LLC application for the "Shore Walls Pocomoke Community Mural" project. The applicant requested \$10,000, and staff recommended the full award of \$10,000. The proposed project is scheduled to begin January 1, 2027, with an anticipated completion date of May 31, 2027. Staff explained that the project aligns with several Community Impact Grant Program priorities, including community beautification, youth development, education, and workforce readiness. The proposed mural would create a permanent piece of public art intended to reflect Pocomoke City's identity and sense of place, while providing opportunities for local residents and artists to participate in the project. The presentation further explained that the project would provide a paid opportunity

for at least one Pocomoke City artist to gain professional mural experience and receive mentorship. The project would also engage at least 40 residents through community input, painting opportunities, and related activities. Staff noted that the project would seek to partner with local schools, particularly Pocomoke High School, to connect students and emerging artists with opportunities to participate in and learn from the mural project.

The proposed use of grant funds was outlined as follows:

- \$3,000 for local artists;
- \$3,500 for wall contract services;
- \$1,500 for mural supplies;
- \$1,000 for equipment and site preparation;
- \$500 for the community painting program; and
- \$500 for artist recognition signage and photography.

The anticipated outcomes include completion of one professionally designed and installed public mural by May 2027, selection and compensation of at least one Pocomoke City resident artist for professional mural experience and mentorship, and engagement of at least 40 residents through community input and participation in the painting process. The project also anticipates collecting feedback from at least 20 community participants, with a goal of at least 80 percent of participants reporting increased community pride or an improved perception of the mural site. The Mayor and Council discussed the community value of investing in public art, opportunities for local artists and students, and the potential for the mural to contribute to community pride and beautification. The presentation emphasized that the project would not only result in a permanent visual improvement to the City but would also provide opportunities for residents to participate directly in the creation of the artwork. Mayor Nock commented that he believed the proposed mural required additional discussion and consideration before moving forward. He stated that he felt the Council should “hold back” on the proposal at that time because there were additional questions that needed to be addressed and further conversation was necessary. Mayor Nock acknowledged that the proposed artist, Brandon Bell, was an accomplished artist. He also noted that he understood the mural project was associated with the larger Shore Walls initiative and that the proposed project could serve as a satellite event connected to the larger Shore Walls program. Mayor Nock further expressed concern regarding the number and placement of murals in the downtown area. He referenced his understanding that another mural was proposed for the Newberry Building and questioned whether the City should continue adding murals downtown. His comments reflected a desire for the City to consider the overall appearance and direction of downtown before approving additional mural projects. The discussion also clarified that the City retains some oversight of proposed murals through the City's planning and zoning commission process and applicable regulations for a newly passed ordinance on murals. No formal vote was taken during the Work Session.

Worcester County Commission on Aging, Inc. / Pocomoke 50 Plus - Ms. Russell presented the application submitted by Worcester County Commission on Aging, Inc., also known as Pocomoke 50 Plus. The project was titled “Supporting Senior Citizens One Meal and Trip at a Time.” The organization requested \$10,000, and staff recommended the full \$10,000 award. The project was proposed to begin upon notification of the award and was expected to be completed by June 2027. Staff explained that the project met the Community Impact Grant criteria relating to senior services, food insecurity, and public health and wellness. The program would support approximately 83 Pocomoke City seniors currently participating in the Meals on Wheels, Pocomoke Wheels, and Pocomoke 50 Plus programs. The services provide nutritious meals, social interaction, and transportation to vulnerable and homebound seniors while addressing food insecurity, social isolation, and transportation barriers. Staff stated that grant funds would be used to support Meals on Wheels and Pocomoke 50 Plus meal supplies, as well as transportation to and from the Pocomoke 50 Plus Center. The proposed transportation allocation was identified as \$1,969. The anticipated outcomes included providing 768 Meals on Wheels meals to 24 homebound Pocomoke City residents from October 1 through November 30, 2026, providing 59 meals to Pocomoke residents attending the Pocomoke 50 Plus Center, and providing transportation to and from the center for a four-month period from October 1, 2026, through January 31, 2027. The organization would also

track Meals on Wheels deliveries, meals provided through the 50 Plus program, and transportation rides provided to Pocomoke residents. During the discussion, a Council Member commented on personal experience delivering Meals on Wheels and stated that it was a worthwhile program. Council Members also commented positively on the Pocomoke 50 Plus program and its activities for senior residents. No formal vote was taken during the Work Session.

First Baptist Church of Pocomoke City - Ms. Russell next presented the application submitted by First Baptist Church of Pocomoke City for its Community Outreach Fellowship Meal project. The organization requested \$9,000, and staff recommended the full \$9,000 award. The proposed project was scheduled to begin in October 2026 and was expected to continue through approximately September 2027. Staff explained that the project met the grant criteria for senior services, food insecurity, and public health and wellness. The proposed project would restore the church's Community Connect Hot Meal Program from a monthly service to a weekly hot-meal program. The program would provide weekly hot meals to approximately 40 to 60 community members, primarily serving vulnerable populations, including elderly residents and low-income families. Staff explained that the program would address food insecurity while also providing opportunities for community members to connect with one another and obtain information about other available community resources. Meals would also be available to elderly homebound residents through a meal sign-up option. Staff reviewed the proposed use of grant funds, which included approximately \$7,500 for food expenses, \$1,250 for weekly consumable supplies, and \$250 for advertising and promotional materials. The anticipated outcome was to restore the Community Connect meal service to a weekly schedule for approximately 50 weeks, serving approximately 50 to 60 individuals each week. Staff subsequently reviewed the grant program timeline. The grant program opened in July 2026, with the first quarterly report due October 1, 2026, followed by additional quarterly reporting in January and April. All grant-funded projects were expected to be completed by June 30, 2027. The Mayor and Council discussed the value of the program and its ability to reach residents beyond the City's youth population. Council Members noted the importance of addressing food insecurity and providing services that benefit elderly residents, low-income families, and other vulnerable members of the community. The Mayor and Council expressed appreciation for the presentation and the proposed expansion of the program. No formal vote was taken during the Work Session.

Pocomoke Elementary School – Warrior Family Kitchen Nights - The Council reviewed the Pocomoke Elementary School – Warrior Family Kitchen Nights grant application. The project requested \$8,430, and staff recommended the full award of \$8,430. The proposed project was scheduled to begin in October 2026 and conclude in April 2027. The application aligned with the Community Impact Grant criteria of food insecurity, public health and wellness, and education. The program was expected to serve approximately 5 to 10 Pocomoke Elementary School families per month, representing approximately 25 to 40 participants per session. The program would prioritize families experiencing food insecurity and those with demonstrated need. The Warrior Family Kitchen Nights program was described as a family-focused initiative designed to strengthen families by teaching participants how to prepare nutritious and affordable meals while providing an opportunity for families to spend meaningful time together. The program would consist of one session per month for six months. The sessions would include hands-on cooking demonstrations conducted in partnership with Market Street Deli in Pocomoke City. Families would participate directly in preparing meals and would receive instruction in practical meal-planning strategies, grocery budgeting, healthy food substitutions, and cooking techniques that could be replicated at home. Each session would conclude with families sharing a meal together and receiving recipes, nutrition information, and ingredients needed to recreate the featured meal at home. During the discussion, it was clarified that the participants would be actively involved in cooking the meals rather than simply receiving prepared food. The sessions would take place in the cafeteria at Pocomoke Elementary School, with cooks brought in to assist with the program. It was also noted that a similar program had been conducted previously, and students had been able to take prepared meals home with them. The discussion indicated that students had responded positively to the program, enjoyed participating in the cooking activities, and gained experience preparing healthier meals. Parents were also involved in the activities, providing an opportunity for families to interact and participate together. The program's stated goals included reducing food insecurity,

improving family nutrition, and encouraging regular family mealtimes and conversations that strengthen family relationships. The expected outcomes included 90% of participating families reporting increased confidence in preparing healthy meals on a budget, 80% recreating at least one featured recipe at home, 75% reporting an increase in shared family meals, and 80% demonstrating increased knowledge of healthy meal planning while operating within a limited budget. The Council also discussed the number and frequency of sessions, confirming that the program would consist of six monthly sessions beginning in October. The discussion further emphasized that the intent of the program was not simply to provide meals, but to teach families how to prepare affordable, healthier meals at home and reduce reliance on highly processed foods. The Mayor and Council expressed general support for the program and its emphasis on family participation, nutrition, education, and addressing food insecurity within the community. No formal vote was taken during the Work Session.

Pocomoke High School – Pocomoke Goes Green - The next application was from Pocomoke High School for the Pocomoke Goes Green Community Cleanup and Recycling Rally. The school requested \$9,566.85, with staff recommending the full amount. The proposed project would begin in October 2026 and conclude on Earth Day, April 22, 2027. The project would involve student-led community cleanup and recycling activities and aligned with youth development, community beautification, environmental sustainability, public safety, workforce development, and education. Grant funds would support cleanup and recycling equipment and supplies, driver's education for 16 students, a contribution to the SADD program, and senior banners. The project would measure participation, litter and recycling collected, geographic areas and properties impacted, and community participation. Staff also explained that the project would provide driver's education opportunities to 16 Pocomoke High School students. The Mayor and Council discussed the importance of programs that benefit both students and the broader community. No formal vote was taken during the Work Session.

Pocomoke Elementary School Judy Center Early Learning Hub - The final application discussed was from the Pocomoke Elementary School Judy Center Early Learning Hub for the Circle of Care Initiative. The organization requested \$10,000, with staff recommending the full amount. The project would begin upon notification of the award and was expected to be completed by June 1, 2027. The program serves families with children from birth through age five within the Pocomoke Elementary School catchment area. Staff explained that the program provides food and essential-needs assistance, connects families with community resources, and provides caregiver education and wellness programming addressing nutrition, financial literacy, physical wellness, stress management, and family stability. Grant funds would support contracted services, family assistance and essential needs, wellness and financial literacy programming, and family engagement and outreach. The anticipated outcomes included providing food and essential-needs assistance, expanding caregiver education, and increasing family engagement and connections to community resources. No formal vote was taken during the Work Session.

At the conclusion of the Community Impact Grant discussion, the Mayor and Council considered the importance of programs that provide assistance not only to children and students, but also to parents and adults. It was noted that while investing in youth remains an important priority, there is also a need to consider programs that directly engage adults and families and provide practical resources that can improve their overall quality of life. The discussion recognized that schools currently serve as an important location for many community programs because they have facilities available to accommodate these activities. It was explained that programs such as the Warrior Family Kitchen Nights are able to operate through the schools because of the existing space and the ability to reach families through the school system. The Council discussed the potential for the City's future Community Center to provide an additional location where these types of programs could be offered to a broader segment of the community. The Council also discussed the importance of determining how programs could be structured to have a meaningful impact beyond the immediate participants. The conversation included consideration of whether programs should be designed to reach families as a whole rather than focusing exclusively on individual age groups. The Warrior Family Kitchen Nights program was recognized as an example of a program that involves both children and parents by providing hands-on

instruction, family participation, and an opportunity to prepare and share meals together. The discussion then turned to the broader question of how the City can connect residents with the many services and resources already available throughout the community. It was acknowledged that numerous organizations, churches, agencies, and other community groups provide assistance to residents; however, simply having programs available does not necessarily mean that residents who need assistance will participate. The Council discussed the difficulty of relying exclusively on traditional forms of communication, particularly email. It was noted that residents may receive large numbers of emails, messages may be overlooked or directed to spam folders, and some residents may not regularly monitor electronic communications. The discussion suggested that the City and community organizations may need to use more creative and direct methods of outreach. The possibility of meeting residents where they are and engaging them directly in person was discussed as one potential approach. Rather than relying solely on emails, social media, or other passive forms of communication, representatives could make personal contact with residents and have direct conversations about available programs and services. The intent would be to make residents more aware of available assistance and encourage participation by individuals and families who may otherwise not seek out the services on their own. Mayor Nock stated that he supported the programs being discussed and did not want his comments to be interpreted as opposition to the proposed activities. He explained that his concern was primarily focused on determining how the City can actually engage residents and how it can effectively connect people with the assistance and programs available to them. Mayor Nock emphasized the need to determine practical ways to reach residents and asked, in substance, how the City could accomplish this objective. He indicated that the issue was not whether the programs were worthwhile, but rather how the City could make sure the programs were reaching the people they were intended to serve. The discussion further acknowledged that there are limits to the City's ability to reach every resident. It was noted that individuals ultimately have to be willing to accept assistance and participate in available programs. Even when organizations make services available and conduct outreach, some individuals may decline assistance or choose not to participate. The Council recognized that there is no single solution to the challenge of community engagement. Existing outreach efforts, including contacting community agencies and organizations, using social media, and utilizing other public communication methods, were discussed. The conversation emphasized the importance of continuing to evaluate these methods and finding additional ways to make residents aware of the resources available to them. Ms. Matthews also discussed the future role of the Community Center and expressed that she would like to see community-based programs eventually utilize the facility once it is available. She explained that many activities are currently held at schools because the schools have facilities that can accommodate them. Once the City has an appropriate facility in place, programs such as those discussed during the grant presentations could potentially be moved to or expanded through the Community Center. Ms. Matthews noted that having a City facility would provide an opportunity to bring programs into a central community location and potentially expand participation beyond the school-based population. The Council discussed the value of having a facility where residents of different ages could participate in programs, receive information, interact with service providers, and take advantage of community resources. The discussion concluded with general recognition that the City has a number of organizations and programs working to assist residents, and that the Community Impact Grant Program provides an opportunity to support those efforts. The Council's discussion focused not only on the merits of the individual grant applications, but also on ensuring that City-supported programs produce a meaningful community impact and that residents are effectively informed about and connected with available services. No formal vote was taken during the Work Session. The discussion was conducted for informational purposes and to allow the Mayor and Council to provide feedback regarding the Community Impact Grant Program and the proposed funding recommendations. The Mayor and Council thanked Ms. Russell for the presentation and work completed on the grant program.

Presentation and Discussion with Talkie Communications Regarding Communication Services

The Mayor and Council proceeded with a presentation and discussion with representatives of Talkie Communications regarding wireless broadband communication services and the potential use of City-owned water tower infrastructure to support the company's service network. A representative of Talkie

Communications explained that the company provides a wireless broadband system that utilizes existing tower infrastructure rather than requiring traditional underground or overhead broadband infrastructure to be constructed throughout the service area. The representative explained that the system uses wireless technology to transmit service from elevated infrastructure to individual residential and business customers. The representative described the customer installation process. A small pole, similar to a satellite-dish mounting pole, is installed at the customer's residence or business. A compact remote node is then installed on the pole. The equipment is connected to the customer's interior network through an Ethernet connection and power-over-Ethernet equipment, with a router then providing internet service to the customer. The representative stated that Talkie Communications generally uses 200 Mbps as its minimum service threshold. The representative explained that the company does not want to provide customers with speeds below that level because lower speeds may not adequately support common household and business uses, including streaming television and the use of school-issued laptops and other internet-dependent devices. Talkie Communications requested the opportunity to utilize space on a City water tower to install equipment that would allow the company to provide broadband service to customers in and around Pocomoke City. The representative explained that the company could run its service line from the equipment on the water tower directly down to the base of the tower and connect into the appropriate infrastructure. The representative advised that the company had previously approached the City several years earlier regarding placing an antenna on a City water tower. The representative indicated that the previous effort did not move forward. The representative explained that, since that time, the company had developed other methods of obtaining a reliable feed, including obtaining a feed directly from television stations in Salisbury that could be utilized as a backup to the antenna system. Discussion was held regarding the City's potential authorization for Talkie Communications to place equipment on a City water tower. A question was raised concerning whether the City would receive a ground fee, licensing fee, or other payment for use of the City's infrastructure. The Talkie Communications representative explained that the specific financial arrangement would need to be worked out, but indicated that the arrangement would likely involve a rental fee for use of the tower. The representative stated that this type of arrangement is used by the company in other communities where its equipment is installed on existing towers. The discussion also addressed the potential coverage area that could be served from a City water tower. A Council Member asked whether Talkie Communications would be able to provide service not only to residents within the City but also to customers located on the outskirts of the City. The Talkie Communications representative explained that coverage depends upon the location of the tower and the customer's distance from the equipment. The representative stated that the company's farthest current customer is approximately two miles from a water tower, demonstrating that the service can extend beyond the immediate area surrounding the tower. The representative further explained that the actual service range can vary depending upon terrain, the location of the tower, and the customer's location. The representative provided an example of a customer located approximately two miles from a water tower in a wooded area. That customer was receiving approximately 170 Mbps, which was below the company's normal 200 Mbps threshold; however, the company continued providing service because of the customer's circumstances and the available infrastructure. The representative noted that a neighboring customer was receiving speeds in excess of 300 Mbps from the same general area. Talkie Communications further explained that, when entering a new community or evaluating a potential service area, the company may establish a temporary demonstration site. The representative described setting up a company truck equipped with the necessary power and equipment at a location so residents can test the service directly. The representative explained that residents can connect to the temporary system, conduct speed tests, and determine whether the service performs adequately for their individual needs before the company proceeds with broader deployment. This approach has been used by Talkie Communications in other communities, including Snow Hill and Greensboro. The discussion provided the Mayor and Council with information regarding the potential benefits and limitations of expanding wireless broadband service through existing City infrastructure. The use of an existing water tower was discussed as a means of potentially expanding service without requiring the company to construct an entirely new tower. The Mayor and Council also discussed the potential for the service to reach customers located outside the immediate downtown or corporate area, depending upon the location of the equipment and available line-of-sight and coverage. The discussion acknowledged that Talkie Communications had previously approached the City regarding placement of wireless equipment on a City

water tower, but that the earlier proposal did not ultimately move forward. The current discussion provided an opportunity for the company to reintroduce the concept and explain its current technology, service capabilities, and potential use of City infrastructure. The Mayor and Council asked questions regarding the proposed equipment, service range, minimum internet speeds, potential customers, and the City's potential financial arrangement for use of the water tower. No formal action or vote was taken during the Work Session. The discussion was informational and was intended to allow the Mayor and Council to better understand Talkie Communications' proposed services and the potential use of City-owned infrastructure. Any future agreement concerning the placement of equipment on a City water tower would require further consideration and appropriate City authorization.

Discussion on ADU's (Accessory Dwelling Unit) Ordinance

The Mayor and Council continued discussion concerning the proposed Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance 2027-O-1. Kristen Tremblay the Planning Department provided information regarding the proposed ordinance and the City's options for establishing reasonable standards for accessory dwelling units. A significant portion of the discussion focused on the maximum allowable size of an ADU in relation to the primary dwelling. Council members expressed concern that allowing an ADU to be as large as 75 percent of the primary dwelling could result in two substantial residential structures being located on the same property. The discussion noted that the State's 75-percent provision represents a maximum under the applicable definition but does not necessarily require the City to permit an ADU at that size. Council members discussed whether a lower percentage or an absolute square-foot limitation would be more appropriate for Pocomoke City's lot sizes and development patterns. Staff noted that allowing a very large ADU could have implications for:

- Sewer capacity;
- Water capacity;
- Number of bedrooms;
- Parking requirements;
- Lot coverage;
- Setbacks; and
- The overall size and appearance of structures on smaller residential lots.

Council members were particularly concerned about the application of ADU standards to smaller residential lots in established areas of the City, including areas along Clark Avenue and other streets where available setback and yard space may be limited. The Council discussed the importance of ensuring that an ADU remains genuinely accessory to the primary dwelling and does not effectively become a second principal dwelling. The Council also discussed whether there should be a distinction between attached/internal ADUs and detached ADUs. One proposal discussed was establishing a separate maximum size for an ADU located entirely within the existing primary dwelling. A maximum of approximately 600 square feet was discussed as one possible standard for internal units in order to prevent the ordinance from effectively legalizing existing illegal duplex configurations. Council members also discussed the number of bedrooms that should be permitted. It was suggested that limiting an ADU to one bedroom would help maintain its accessory nature and prevent the unit from functioning as a separate full-size residence. Setback requirements were also discussed. Council members questioned whether an ADU should be required to remain within a specified distance of the primary dwelling. Staff discussed the approach used in Worcester County, where an accessory dwelling may be required to remain within a certain distance of the primary residence and may be positioned behind the primary dwelling so that it remains visually subordinate from the street. The Council discussed architectural compatibility and whether detached ADUs should be required to complement the primary dwelling. Members expressed support for standards requiring an ADU to appear consistent with the primary residence, including compatible colors, materials, and overall appearance. The Council also discussed the need to distinguish an ADU from a tiny home, trailer, or other temporary structure and emphasized that the ordinance should clearly define the type of construction permitted. The Council agreed that the proposed ordinance should continue to be refined and that staff should consider standards used by neighboring jurisdictions. The Council discussed whether a joint meeting with the Planning Commission was necessary. The consensus was to forward the proposed ordinance to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation rather than hold a joint meeting. The Planning Commission's recommendations would then return to the Mayor and Council. Staff advised that the ordinance could be placed before the Mayor and Council for first reading at the first meeting in September, with any necessary amendments considered before or during the legislative process. No formal vote was taken.

Discussion Regarding Public Safety Requirements on Large-Scale Special Events

The Mayor and Council next discussed the City's requirements and procedures for large-scale special events. EMS Chief Ryan addressed the Mayor and Council regarding the City's special-event permitting process, event impact fees, public safety requirements, and the need for appropriate coordination of City and County resources for large-scale events. Ryan explained that, as he reviewed the City's current special-event permitting practices, emergency action planning requirements, and procedures associated with large events, he identified areas where the City's process could be strengthened and made more comprehensive. Ryan explained that the City had developed its special-event permit after previously receiving inadequate advance notice of events. He noted that there had been instances where the City was notified only approximately three weeks before an event, leaving insufficient time for City staff and outside agencies to adequately prepare. He advised that he had recently spoken with County Emergency Services regarding the process and noted that the County has personnel who specialize in event-related emergency planning and coordination. Ryan further explained that large events held within the City can require coordination with several County agencies, including the County Fire Marshal and County Health Department. Although an event may occur within the City's corporate limits, County personnel may still be required to conduct inspections and provide regulatory oversight. He discussed the possibility of developing a more coordinated permitting process between the City and County, potentially establishing a single permit that could be utilized by both jurisdictions. Ryan stated that such a process would require additional development and coordination but could eventually provide a more consistent approach to special-event permitting throughout the County. Ryan described the municipality's role in reviewing large events as that of a regulator, coordinator, and safety monitor. He explained that special-event review should consider multiple areas, including zoning and land use, noise and curfew requirements, Fire Marshal approval, building and code inspections, Health Department requirements, liquor regulations, public safety and security, emergency services, traffic control, and road closures. He noted that Public Works, Police, Fire, and other appropriate departments may need to participate depending upon the size and nature of the event. The discussion also addressed the need for the City to establish clear standards regarding when special-event applications and supporting documents must be submitted. The Mayor expressed the importance of establishing a definite deadline for submission and ensuring that, once an event plan is submitted and approved, the requirements contained within the plan are followed. Ryan discussed the current special-event permit and explained that the existing process allows an event organizer to indicate whether Police, Fire, EMS, Public Works, or other City services are needed. He expressed concern that an event organizer could indicate that no emergency or City services were needed without the City independently evaluating the event and determining what resources were actually necessary. He stated that the City needs an overall review process rather than relying solely upon an applicant's determination of whether emergency services are required. The discussion included the potential financial impact of providing City services to large events. Ryan and staff discussed the possibility of establishing an event impact fee based upon the size and attendance of an event. In addition to an attendance-based impact fee, the discussion included potential charges associated with Public Works services, road closures, and Police and EMS personnel, including applicable hourly overtime costs. The Mayor and Ryan also discussed the size of events that should trigger additional review. The transcript references an event with approximately 750 attendees as an example and later discusses an open-air public assembly of approximately 500 or more persons as a threshold commonly associated with additional fire and emergency planning requirements. The discussion emphasized that larger events require greater advance planning to ensure that public safety resources are not overwhelmed. Ryan also addressed the need for an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for large-scale events. He explained that an EAP should address the specific risks associated with the type of event being conducted and identify appropriate emergency procedures and resources. The discussion included emergency access, medical response, Police and ambulance staging, traffic and road access, weather conditions, and other event-specific hazards. Specific attention was given to events involving higher-risk activities. Ryan discussed events such as motorized sports, dirt drags, tractor-related activities, and rodeos. He explained that events involving vehicles, fueling areas, high-speed activities, mechanical hazards, or livestock require additional planning. The EAP should address matters such as fuel-spill containment, emergency and medical-vehicle access, track or activity-area access, and livestock-related safety considerations. Outdoor events should also include appropriate weather-related considerations and metrics within the emergency action plan. Ryan stated that the City should receive a comprehensive emergency management plan for review and requested that the plan be prepared for the fourth Monday in September. He was directed to coordinate with Planning Director Kristen Tremblay, Mr. Wyatt, and City Manager Brandy Matthews to complete the necessary information and planning materials. The Mayor emphasized the importance of having a consistent process in place for large events and expressed concern about

the City being unaware of an event until it was already occurring or being advertised. The discussion stressed the need for advance notification, departmental review, emergency-service coordination, and a process that allows the City to determine the appropriate level of Police, EMS, Fire, Public Works, and other resources required for each event. No formal action was taken during the Work Session.

Adjourn

Mayor Nock requested a motion to Adjourn the Work Session at 8:09pm. Motion was made by Council Member Hall. Seconded by Council Member Cottman. Mayor Nock called for a vote. Hall – aye, Marshall – nay, Tull – aye, Downing – aye, Cottman – aye.

Approved:


City Clerk