

Holly Gray, Mayor Pro-Tem
Bryan Moyers, Council Member
David Brundage, Council Member



Carl E. Gierisch, Jr., Mayor

Brian Darby, Council Member
Hogan Page, Council Member
David Thompson, Council Member

**MINUTES
ROANOKE CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP
MARCH 4, 2025
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
500 S. OAK STREET
7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT: Mayor Carl E. "Scooter" Gierisch, Jr.; Mayor Pro Tem Holly Gray; Council Members: Brian Darby, David Brundage, Bryan Moyers, and David Thompson; City Manager Cody Petree, and City Secretary April S. Hill.

DEPT. STAFF: Assistant City Manager Jeriahme Miller and Economic Development Manager Siale Langi.

A. CALL CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP TO ORDER

City Council called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Gierisch congratulated Council member Hogan Page on the birth of his daughter.

B. NEW BUSINESS

1. Presentation regarding bond proposition for the convention center project.

Mayor Gierisch gave an overview of the proposed bond election and some background on this project, which has been in the making for 7 years. Mayor Gierisch stated, "we are here to educate, not advocate" for this project.

Mayor Gierisch stated the City of Roanoke was able to acquire the "Qualified Cities Status", which offers incentives (6.25% sales tax, rebated to city) from the state to offset expenses.

Mayor Gierisch explained the project process is to have a signature boutique hotel that integrates the city's values, the character of the city, and the specific to the needs of the Roanoke community.

Mayor Gierisch gave examples of other cities that have hotels, with each hotel embodying that specific city's history (i.e., The Hotel Drover embodies the history of Fort Worth and the Hotel Vin embodies the history of Grapevine). This project hotel will embody the history of Roanoke.



MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE ROANOKE CITY COUNCIL

March 4, 2025
Page 2 of 4

Mayor Gierisch explained due to a change in legislation, it now requires voter approval for this type of project. Mayor Gierisch further explained the funding would be repaid through hotel revenues, sales tax, user fees, and Hotel Tax (H.O.T. Tax), rather than direct property tax increases.

City Manager Cody Petree explained the four key funding sources will be utilized to repay the bond. However, in the event property taxes had to be raised for any reason, it would have to go before City Council during the budget process. City Manager Cody Petree further explained that the Texas Legislature is looking into a current bill, that could require voter approval for tax increases. It is not the intention of the city to raise property taxes.

Mayor Gierisch stated the renderings shown are a conceptual design, that may change some during the process.

City Manager Cody Petree stated the senior ballroom will be approximately 8,000 square feet and the junior ballroom will be approximately 3,000 square feet, with meeting space, a 3,500 square foot restaurant, and outdoor dining. The project would be 10 months for the design, and 18 to 24 months of construction.

Mayor Gierisch invited attendees to speak or ask questions.

Sean Turner, Roanoke resident asked if there have been any studies to see if economically this project is viable.

City Manager Cody Petree stated studies have been conducted by CBRE, which helps ascertain the expenses and revenues, and would be happy to share that information.

Sean Turner stated most residents would be in agreement, \$62 million is a lot of money, having access to the forecast would show a good sign of stewardship. Sean Turner asked with Garfield being selected as the Project Manager, has there been any type of preconstruction paid by the city. If not, what type of expenses will there be leading up to the start of construction.

City Manager Cody Petree stated the cost thus far has been \$400,000 for preliminary design, putting the bond package together, and the CBRE study.

Sean Turner asked if the city would be the owner of the convention center and would be reimbursed by user fees, and other fees, does this encompass the hotel or is that a separate project built on top of the convention center.

City Manager Cody Petree explained the local government corporation would finance the hotel component, and the hotelier will lease the convention center.



MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE ROANOKE CITY COUNCIL

March 4, 2025
Page 3 of 4

Sean Turner stated with all of the hotels and convention centers in the area, his concern is showing a valid demand for the hotel/convention center in Roanoke and that the city would benefit from it.

Mayor Gierisch stated that the city is surrounded by Fortune 500 companies and gave examples of others who would be potential guests to utilize the hotel and convention center. This project will be beneficial to the local restaurants and business.

City Manager Cody Petree explained the numbers given in the study show an increase in hotel stays, since 2016, with the exception of during covid.

Councilmember Bryan Moyers asked if this is an economic or hotel study.

City Manager Cody Petree stated it is the hotel study, but it is very similar.

Councilmember asked if the study can be shared.

City Manager Cody Petree stated yes, and introduced Stephen Galbreath, with Garfield Public/Private LLC.

Stephen Galbreath stated CBRE is international and one of the largest hospitality consultants in the United States. They do not benefit from this project; they give a third-party opinion on how it will do in the market, and the numbers given are impressive. Mr. Galbreath gave an overview of the funding for the entire project.

Sally Aldridge, President of the Metroport Chamber, stated this project will be very beneficial to this area. This type of venue is needed in this area, which has Global and Fortune 500 and 100 companies, in addition to other local businesses that can utilize the hotel and convention center, instead of utilizing hotels and meeting spaces in other cities.

Tina Patel, owner of Comfort Suites of Roanoke, feels this will be beneficial to her business, as an "overflow" hotel in the area.

City Manager Cody Petree explained Roanoke is currently a "daytime only" destination, and believes this will revitalize Roanoke by bringing in visitors and guests that will stay longer.

John Dancer, owner of several properties on Oak Street, stated he supports this project, as the walkability from the hotel to the restaurants will benefit guests.

City Manager Cody Petree stated it is more likely for guests to stay at a hotel that offers things to do nearby, as opposed to those that do not.



MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE ROANOKE CITY COUNCIL

March 4, 2025
Page 4 of 4

John Delin, owner Integrity Group, stated he has been involved with the development of the Roanoke downtown area since 2016, and supports this project as this will benefit the downtown area, and will bring more business to the downtown area.

Mayor Pro Tem Holly Gray addressed the bond and past projects, stating the City of Roanoke has a proven track record of building responsible projects, and walking away from a project if it wasn't right for Roanoke. Mayor Pro Tem Holly Gray encouraged residents to reach out to the Mayor and City Council with any questions and/or concerns.

Ray Garfield, Garfield Public/Private LLC, clarified the saying "\$30 to \$300"; building a convention center without an adjacent hotel for multi-day stay, determines how much guests will spend during their time in the city.

Annette Van Grinsven, owner of Wine:30 on Oak Street, stated they chose their current location due to information given that a hotel/convention center would be built (across street). The project will help increase the foot traffic to her business and those around her. Ms. Van Grinsven asked what is the city doing to get the information regarding the bond to residents, realizing the city can only educate, not advocate.

Mayor Gierisch stated the city has put together marking material and a web page to educate residents on the bond election.

Mayor Gierisch stated Roanoke's location creates a lot of opportunities and an advantage of moving forward with this project.

Mayor Gierisch encouraged everyone to reach out to him or City Council if they any additional questions and/or concerns.

C. **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Gierisch adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Carl E. "Scooter" Gierisch, Jr., Mayor

April S. Hill, City Secretary

