

The Rundown: Disproportionate minority contact report to be presented at council meeting
written by Newspack Team | January 29, 2020



Next Monday is the first Monday of February (is it just me, or did January seem to last a very long time?), so it's also time for another Charlottesville City Council meeting. Here's a link to the full agenda, and here's a link to the short version.

Here's a quick look at some things of note on the agenda:

- The biggest agenda item is the last one, the long-awaited disproportionate minority contact story is getting a formal presentation
- Form-based code for the area south of the Downtown Mall will be presented to the City Council, but it is not yet ready for a vote
- The City Market's lease on Water Street is up for another extension
- There's a funding request to pilot transit between the Shenandoah Valley and Charlottesville
- The council is discussing what to do with surplus funds

Disproportionate minority contact

MGT Consulting Group is presenting its disproportionate minority contact study. More than five years ago, a city report concluded that the number of police stops and arrests of African American juveniles was disproportionate. Work to craft a similar study for adults in the city and Albemarle County began around 2016.

The consulting group began work on the first phase in July, and its work was funded in part by a \$100,000 grant from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services. The executive summary, which includes several key points and recommendations can be found on pages 7-9 of the document. The Daily Progress parses the report here.

Form-based code

In October, Emily Hays wrote about the proposed form-based code for a part of Charlottesville's Strategic Investment area, the area south of the Downtown Mall. Form-based code is a type of zoning that emphasizes the form of buildings first and its use second. It has the goal of encouraging mixed uses, walkable communities and creating a clear vision for an area.

Two weeks ago, the Planning Commission declined to make a recommendation on the proposal to the City Council but forwarded its comments. Additionally, some community members have expressed concerns about what the form-based code will do and argued that the city complete the housing policy, Comprehensive Plan update and zoning code rewrite first.

City Market

The next three items are in the consent agenda. For this one, the city once again is voting on a sublease of 100 E. Water St. for the Charlottesville City Market. It moved in 2015 to make way for the construction of West2nd development, which has been all but dead since late about Aug. 2018.

The sublease of the lot for the 2020 season, which runs from April to December, is \$99,750. Of this, \$34,125 will be paid out of the City Market Relocation account and the remainder is expected to be included in the fiscal year 2021 general fund budget proposal. The City Council could vote to put the city market back on the 100 W. Water Street lot, but that would reduce the number of vendors spaces by 20 and the city would lose \$18,000 in parking revenue, according to the staff report.

Afton Express

It won't be a locomotive chugging through the Crozet Tunnel, but the Afton Express soon could be pulling into Charlottesville. Both the Thomas Jefferson and Central Shenandoah planning district commissions are working to secure funding to pilot a transit service that connects Staunton, Waynesboro and Augusta County to the Charlottesville area. The grant requires matching funds, and the city has been asked to commit \$17,400 over a four fiscal year commitment that begins with fiscal 2021.

If approved, the bus would stop at Fifth Street Station Parkway, at both the University of Virginia Grounds and Medical Center and in downtown Charlottesville.

Show me the money

Fiscal year 2019 ended on June 30 with a surplus of \$5.8 million, which is similar to the past five fiscal years. The city has a policy of earmarking any surplus on one-time funding. Items that could be funded include:

- \$50,000 for the startup personnel and operating costs of the Civilian Review Board;
- \$1 million for the citywide reserve fund;

- \$96,000 for equipment replacement and facility repairs at the police department;
- \$700,000 to the Charlottesville Affordable Housing Fund; and
- \$ million for a citywide compensation study.

A public hearing on the proposal is scheduled for the Feb. 17 City Council meeting.

Want to see the meeting for yourself?

If you're new here, City Council meetings typically are on every first and third Monday and begin at 6:30 p.m. The agendas have gotten leaner, but the meetings still sometimes run long.

- If you drive there, there are parking validation cards near the front where the microphone for citizen comments.
- If you take the bus, check the Charlottesville Area Transit schedule to ensure that you don't get stranded before the meeting ends.
- If you don't want to go to City Hall to see the meeting in person, it's on the city's Channel 10 or online [here](#) or [here](#).
- For more information, visit the City Council's [page](#).