

Monday, September 8, 2025
Six o'clock p.m.
North Little Rock City Hall Council Chambers
300 Main Street
North Little Rock, Arkansas

The regular meeting of the North Little Rock City Council scheduled for Monday, September 8, 2025, was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by the Honorable Acting Mayor Ron Harris.

The roll was called and the following Council Members answered to their names: NATHAN HAMILTON, NICOLE HART, LINDA ROBINSON, STEVE BAXTER, RON HARRIS, SCOTT FOWLER and VINCE INSALACO, III (7/0). City Clerk/Treasurer Diane Whitbey, Deputy City Clerk/Enforcement Officer David Pettit, and City Attorney Amy Fields were also present.

The prayer and pledge of allegiance were led by Acting Mayor Harris.

On the motion of Council Member Fowler and seconded by Council Member Insalaco, III, and by consent of all members present, the minutes from the North Little Rock City Council meeting held on Monday, August 25, 2025, were approved, accepted, and filed as prepared by Chief Deputy City Clerk Katelyn Thomas (7/0).

On the motion of Council Member Baxter and seconded by Council Member Insalaco, III, and by consent of all members present communication #1 was accepted and filed (7/0).

1. Derrell Hartwick, President and Chief Executive Officer North Little Rock Chamber of Commerce – Economic Development Activity Report Q3 2025.

PRESENTATIONS

None.

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARING

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

R-25-138 (RESOLUTION NO. 11129 – MAYOR HARTWICK)

A RESOLUTION DECLARING CERTAIN BUILDINGS, HOUSES AND OTHER STRUCTURES LOCATED AT 1719 HIGHWAY 161 IN THE CITY NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS, TO CONSTITUTE A PUBLIC NUISANCE AND CONDEMNING SAID STRUCTURES; PROVIDING A PERIOD OF TIME FOR PROPERTY OWNER TO ABATE SAID NUISANCE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read and a public hearing convened

and adjourned Monday, September 8, 2025. The item was read and Acting Mayor Harris convened a public hearing. There being no one present wishing to be heard, the public hearing was adjourned. On the motion of Council Member Hamilton and seconded by Council Member Robinson, and by consent of all members present, the resolution was adopted (7/0).

CONSENT AGENDA

By voice vote and all members present having voted “aye”, consent agenda items R-25-144, R-25-146, R-25-147, R-25-148, R-25-150, R-25-151 and R-25-152 were adopted (7/0). City Attorney Fields asked that R-25-145 be held as additional legislation is required for the appointment. Council Member Hamilton asked that R-25-149 be pulled and called under new business.

R-25-144 (RESOLUTION NO. 11130 – MAYOR HARTWICK)

A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE REAPPOINTMENT OF BISHOP D. L. LINDSEY TO THE NORTH LITTLE ROCK RESIDENTIAL HOUSING FACILITIES BOARD; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was adopted (7/0).

R-25-145

A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE REAPPOINTMENT OF KENDA SHIELDS TO THE NORTH LITTLE ROCK RESIDENTIAL HOUSING FACILITIES BOARD; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was pulled and held.

R-25-146 (RESOLUTION NO. 11131 – MAYOR HARTWICK)

A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE REAPPOINTMENT OF GINNY MATTHEWS TO THE NORTH LITTLE ROCK RESIDENTIAL HOUSING FACILITIES BOARD; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was adopted (7/0).

R-25-147 (RESOLUTION NO. 11132 – MAYOR HARTWICK)

A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING THOMAS MARR TO THE NORTH LITTLE ROCK HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was adopted (7/0).

R-25-148 (RESOLUTION NO. 11133 – MAYOR HARTWICK)

A RESOLUTION REAPPOINTING J. MASON TOMS TO THE NORTH LITTLE ROCK HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was adopted (7/0).

R-25-149 *was pulled and called under new business.*

R-25-150 (RESOLUTION NO. 11134 – MAYOR HARTWICK)

A RESOLUTION WAIVING FORMAL BIDDING REQUIREMENTS TO UPGRADE TRANSMISSION FACILITIES AT FAULKNER LAKE SUBSTATION; AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND CITY CLERK TO EXECTUE A CONTRIBUTION FOR CONSTRUCTION

COSTS AGREEMENT WITH ENTERGY ARKANSAS, INC; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,
was adopted. (\$8,553,255)

R-25-151 (RESOLUTION NO. 11135 – MAYOR HARTWICK)
A RESOLUTION DECLARING CERTAIN CITY-OWNED ITEMS AND OTHER
EQUIPMENT AS SURPLUS; PROVIDING FOR AUCTION THEREOF; AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES, was adopted (7/0).

R-25-152 (RESOLUTION NO. 11136 – COUNCIL MEMBER HARRIS)
A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A NON-BINDING
LETTER OF INTENT WITH CHAMPION HEALTH, INC. TO NEGOTIATE A CONTRACT
TO IMPLEMENT THE CHAMP PLAN, A VOLUNTARY SUPPLEMENTAL HEALTH PLAN,
FOR CITY EMPLOYEES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was adopted (7/0).

NEW BUSINESS

R-25-149 (RESOLUTION NO. 11137 – MAYOR HARTWICK)
A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND CITY CLERK TO EXECUTE A REAL
ESTATE AND PURCHASE AGREEMENT TO PURCHASE CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY
LOCATED ALONG INTERSTATE 40 IN THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK,
ARKANSAS, ON BEHALF OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK WASTEWATER UTILITY, FROM
THE WOODCREST COMPANY, LLLP; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. A motion
to adopt was made by Council Member Hamilton and seconded by Council Member Robinson.
Council Member Hamilton asked Wastewater Utility Executive Director Michael Clayton to
provide an overview. Mr. Clayton said the utility is entering a new phase to managing storm
water within the sanitary sewer system that requires increasing capacity of large diameter pipes.
Hydraulic capacity upgrades are needed. This 115 acre track is an ideal location north of the
railroad tracks (Dark Hollow) and south of (Interstate) 40 and is not directly accessible to the
public. A consultant previously recommended facilities in this area. Council Member Hamilton
thanked Mr. Clayton for the information. On the previous motion, and by consent of all
members present, the resolution was adopted (7/0). (\$1.7 million)

R-25-153 (RESOLUTION NO. 11138 – MAYOR HARTWICK)
A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND CERTIFYING AMOUNTS OF LIENS TO BE FILED
WITH THE PULASKI COUNTY TAX COLLECTOR AGAINST CERTAIN REAL
PROPERTIES IN THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS, AS A RESULT OF
GRASS CUTTING EXPENSES AND ABATEMENT OF OTHER NUISANCES; AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES, was read. A motion to adopt was made by Council Member Harris and
seconded by Council Member Robinson. Acting Mayor Harris convened a public hearing.
There being no one present wishing to be heard, the public hearing was adjourned. On the
previous motion, and by consent of all members present, the resolution was adopted (7/0).
O-25-71 (ORDINANCE NO. 9799 – MAYOR HARTWICK)

AN ORDINANCE DEFINING “SAFETY CONSULTANT FOR NORTH LITTLE ROCK ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT” TO BE A PROFESSIONAL SERVICE UNDER ARKANSAS LAW; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. On the motion of Council Member Baxter, and seconded by Council Member Robinson, and by consent of all members present, the readings were suspended (7/0). On the motion of Council Member Harris and seconded by Council Member Fowler, and the roll having been called, all members present having voted in the affirmative, the ordinance was adopted (7/0). Emergency clause adopted (7/0).

O-25-72 (ORDINANCE NO. 9800 – COUNCIL MEMBER HAMILTON)

AN ORDINANCE REZONING CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1615 NORTH POPLAR STREET IN THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS, FROM C3 TO R3 ZONING CLASSIFICATION, BY AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 9263; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. On the motion of Council Member Hamilton and seconded by Council Member Baxter, and by consent of all members present, the readings were suspended (7/0). A motion to adopt was made by Council Member Hamilton and seconded by Council Member Hart. Council Member Hamilton advised this residential area was zoned during Urban Renewal (1960’s) that contained residential homes. It was rezoned as commercial for a mall a potential mall. Council Member Baxter asked if the proposed zoning R3 instead of R1 was because of the lot size(s). On the previous motion, and the roll having been called, and all members present having voted in the affirmative, the ordinance was adopted (7/0). Emergency clause adopted (7/0). (*Jeff Aclin, Arkansas Homes and Rentals*)

O-25-73 (ORDINANCE NO. 9801 – COUNCIL MEMBER HAMILTON)

AN ORDINANCE REZONING CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 1608 NORTH OLIVE STREET IN THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS, FROM C3 TO R3 ZONING CLASSIFICATION, BY AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 9263; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. On the motion of Council Member Hamilton and seconded by Council Member Insalaco, III, and by consent of all members present, the readings were suspended (7/0). On the motion of Council Member Hamilton and seconded by Council Member Insalaco, III, and the roll having been called, and all members present having voted in the affirmative, the ordinance was adopted (7/0). Emergency clause adopted (7/0). (*Jeff Aclin, Arkansas Homes and Rentals*)

O-25-74

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK MUNICIPAL PROPERTY OWNERS’ MULTIPURPOSE IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 41 (RIVER ROCK ESTATES PROJECT); DECLARING AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, was read. On the motion of Council Member Robinson and seconded by Council Member Hart, and by consent of all members present, with the exception of Council Member

Hamilton who passed, the readings were suspended (6/1). A motion to adopt was made by Council Member Hart and seconded by Council Member Robinson. Acting Mayor Harris convened a public hearing. Mr. Clayton advised North Little Rock Wastewater Utility (NLRWW) supports the development. He asked the item be held two-weeks to allow (NLRWW) attorneys to work out some language (content) concerns. Council Member Hart asked if Mr. Clayton had talked with the proposer(s) of the legislation. Mr. Clayton said he became aware of the proposed ordinance last Thursday. Meetings between the parties took place about a year ago. NLRWW concerns included ownership and maintenance of the lines versus ownership of the district. Modifications may be needed on the NLRWW side. Mr. Sam Hilburn, Attorney at Law represents NLRWW. He referenced language within the ordinance that would make NLRWW the collection agency for the benefit of the district. The developer advised he plans to run a line to the area. When the developer begins developing lots (within the District), he wants the NLRWW to connect them and collect the fees for him. The NLRWW commissioners have not had an opportunity to have a meeting to discuss this. There were questions with regard to the NLRWW acting as an intermediary for the (Improvement) District. Mr. Hilburn said NLRWW does serve existing districts in Sherwood; the utility takes over lines already laid and collected. Making the connection and collection of the fees could be expensive. From this perspective, NLRWW may have to ask for a rate increase to cover costs. The cost to run the initial line will be about \$500,000.00, which the developer will pay. In other Improvement Districts, the NLRWW owns the lines. The only collection is for usage, which is based on water usage. Council Member Robinson asked if what Mr. Hilburn referenced was separate from the proposed legislation and if it could be worked out later. Mr. Hilburn said (connection and) collection is included in this ordinance. Council Member Robinson recommended voting on the legislation and the parties work it out. Mr. Will Allison, Attorney at Law spoke for his client Mr. Josh Ferguson who is with River Rock. Mr. Allison referenced (Section 1: (4) of) the ordinance which gives NLRWW the ability to approve connections to the utility. Once the ordinance is adopted, a contract/subsequent agreement can be made between the parties. Mr. Ferguson, District Commissioner for the proposed Improvement District said he had been working with NLRWW for three (3) years. The subdivision could have been completed if NLRWW had accepted their plans sooner. Mr. Ferguson referenced ownership of the line. Acting Mayor Harris asked City Attorney Fields to provide comments. Ms. Fields was not aware there was an issue until now. Language included in the ordinance seemed to be the cause of concern for Mr. Clayton and Mr. Hilburn. Mr. Allison said the parties had numerous meetings. Mr. Hilburn said there is no issue with creating the district. If the ordinance were adopted as written, the council would dictate how the utility runs the area and receives payments related to the same. The issue is being a collection agency for a private party. This item will be considered by the NLRWW Commission in a meeting tomorrow (September 9, 2025). Council Member Hamilton said there appears to be a communication issue. Council Member Hart asked for the section of the ordinance being referred to. Ms. Whitbey referenced Section 1: (4). Mr. Hilburn read the following: *assessing and collecting connection fees from other property owners inside or outside the District who are approved by North Little Rock Wastewater Utility*. Mr. Hilburn said if he

built a house and ran electricity and sewer to it, the utility should not be collecting for it. The cost would be paid upfront to the developer. When you buy a house, utilities are already there. Mr. Hilburn advised, most of the cities in the state will not do this (collection). Council Member Baxter asked if there was anything that stated NLRWW could not collect for an Improvement District. City Attorney Fields said there was not to her knowledge. Council Member Harris asked the developer if there was an issue with holding the legislation until the next meeting. Mr. Ferguson said the project had been on hold for a long time. He has tractors in motion and is moving dirt. He has equipment and material (pipes) on the ground. He cannot start the pipe work until the district is formed. He said 4-inch pipe would have been a lot cheaper for him to install than a 10-inch ductile iron pipe, incased in the concrete in the ground which is now required by NLRWW. The distance he referenced was 3,000 feet. He said if approval (of the legislation) is delayed two-weeks, getting the contract signed will be another three-months out. Council Member Hamilton said Attorney Lisa Ferrell worked on a lot of Improvement Districts. He then referenced Section 1: (4) and asked if it was unique. Mr. Allison said typically, this Improvement District would only impose on the 23 lots subject to it. This section would allow for another subdivision that is not there yet to tie in later date, the municipality would either allow or not allow for connection (to the existing line) for a fee. Mr. Ferguson said there has been discussion on whether he owns the line or the utility owns the line. Normally, once the line is completed and inspected, the utility would take it over. Council Member Hamilton said he understood the language was included so the developer could pay for the additions using the fees. Council Member Baxter jogs by the property weekly. He had not noticed anything going on for some time. He referenced an area where the line will run and other possible developments in the area. He asked if those developments take place would the application go through Mr. Ferguson or the Improvement District. Mr. Ferguson said approval would go through NLRWW. Fees are not passed on to homeowners, but the developer. It's only fair for them to pay a connection fee. Mr. Hilburn reiterated it is not the responsibility of the NLRWW, it is the responsibility of the developer. Mr. Allison referenced language *inside or outside the district who are approved by the North Little Rock Wastewater Utility to connect*. If there is no approval there would be no connection. Mr. Ferguson said he will have to pay a connection fee to connect to Esplanade. Council Member Harris said there were many legal questions that should have been resolved. Mr. Hilburn suggested amending the legislation to remove the language in question. City Attorney Fields suggested the opportunity to get with (legal) counsel for both sides. Council Member Hart asked if the developer would consider removing item (4) from the legislation. Mr. Ferguson asked if it could be added back in at a later date. Council Member Hamilton said this seemed to be a new thing (NLRWW collecting connection fees on new development). Mr. Allison agreed with holding the item until the next meeting (September 22, 2025). Council Member Robinson asked Mr. Allison what they wanted. Mr. Allison said they want it approved as sponsored. However, he did not want to have issues in six-months after his client had spent a lot of money. If approved as written, the parties would have to enter into a contract immediately for the job to begin. The legislation was then held by the sponsors Council Members Hart and Robinson.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Rodney Cotton, Ashley Downs HOA (Home Owners Association) President thanked the council for the efforts to provide street lighting. There continues to be a flooding/drainage problem in their neighborhood. He said he addressed the council a few months ago about the issues. Last week, North Little Rock got 4 to 6 inches of rain within a short period of time that had a devastating effect on their community. The existing drainage infrastructure was overwhelmed. It caused multiple residents to have to put out sandbags to protect their homes. Flooding has caused property damage and significant emotional and financial distress. The reoccurrence highlights the inadequacy of the existing drainage system. Mr. Cotton requested a clear and actionable plan to address the infrastructure failures. He asked for a timeline and how the community could help. He said the HOA understands resources are stretched and priorities must be balanced. Their neighborhood is growing and proud to be in the city. Mr. Cotton passed around photos of current flooding. Acting Mayor Harris asked City Engineer David Cook to come forward. Mr. Cook said the city had been out several times. Sinkholes and a culvert were referenced. The sink hole was temporally filled in. Mr. Cotton said it had gotten bigger. Mr. Cook said there are two (2) choke points that drain into a detention pond. The water drains under Citation and Secretariat then out. The city has a design for the area. Mr. Cook said the pipes were undersized when the development was made. He did not know if this was intentional to hold water back. To get the water out faster, those pipes would need to be upsized. He advised he had provided a cost estimate to Council Member Hart recently. Council Member Hart advised she visited the area during recent flooding. Ward (2) does not currently have the funding and she has been looking at other options. Originally, the thought was some things (projects) could move forward in 2025 with 2026 funds, that was not able to happen. Council Member Robinson said Mayor Hartwick visited the area during the flooding as well. She added there are flooding issues across Ward 2. There are older communities that flood worse than this one. Mr. Cotton said flooding is beginning to be a frequent issue. The discussion has been to either increase the size of the existing pipes or increase the number. Acting Mayor Harris asked Mr. Cook to provide a report back to neighborhood group. Mr. Cotton said Mr. Cook has been very cooperative. Council Member Hamilton appreciated Mr. Cotton's comments. He noticed in the photos there were no curbs in the photos Mr. Cotton presented. He asked if the developer was required to put in curbs. Mr. Cook said this subdivision was built in the county, then later annexed into the city (North Little Rock). Maintenance of the streets and drainage was specifically left out of the annexation ordinance at that time. Within the past year or so, Council Member (Maurice) Taylor sponsored legislation to accept the streets and drainage. Council Member Hamilton said it is possible drainage was under-engineered when the subdivision was developed. Mr. Cook said there were no plans or other records related to the development. Council Member Hamilton agreed there was a problem in the area. He wasn't clear about funds being moved around. The city will be considering the 2026 budget in the near future. Council Member Baxter said he would be fighting for curb and gutter funds for neighborhoods that were over 75 years old in Ward 3.

There being no further business to come before the Council, and on the motion of Council Member Robinson and seconded by Council Member Baxter, and by consent of all members present, the meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m. (7/0), until the next regularly scheduled meeting scheduled for Monday, September 22, 2025, at six o'clock p.m. in the City Council Chambers in City Hall, located at 300 Main Street, North Little Rock, Arkansas.

APPROVED: _____
MAYOR TERRY C. HARTWICK

ATTEST: _____
DIANE WHITBEY, CITY CLERK