

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 10, 2026 CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

A REGULAR meeting of the Hopewell Council was held on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

John B. Partin, Mayor
Rita Joyner, Vice Mayor
Michael Harris, Councilor
Susan Daye, Councilor
Malik Wheat, Councilor
Lovena Rapole, Councilor

Vice Mayor Joyner makes a motion to go into closed meeting under Va. Code § 2.2-3711(A)(3), (8), and (29), to discuss the acquisition or disposition of real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, the award of a public contract where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the City's bargaining position, and to consult with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters (real estate contract discussions, support agreement with the EDA, lease for city department offices); § 2.2-3711(A)(1), to discuss personnel matters including (appointment to the Recreation Commission, City Attorney annual evaluation, City Clerk six month evaluation, and review City Manager finalists), and § 2.2-3711(A)(29) (health insurance renewal with One Digital). Councilor Rapole seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Harris- Yes
Mayor Partin- Yes
Councilor Ellis- Absent
Councilor Daye- Yes
Councilor Wheat- Yes
Councilor Rapole- Yes
Vice Mayor Joyner- Yes

Motion Passes 6-0

Councilor Wheat makes a motion to reconvene to open meeting. Vice Mayor Joyner seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Harris- Yes
Mayor Partin- Yes
Councilor Ellis- Absent
Councilor Daye- Yes
Councilor Wheat- Yes

Councilor Rapole- Yes
Vice Mayor Joyner- Yes

Motion Passes 6-0

CERTIFICATION PURSUANT TO VIRGINIA CODE §2.2-3712 (D): Were only public business matters (1) lawfully exempted from open-meeting requirements and (2) identified in the closed-meeting motion discussed in the closed meeting?

PRESENT:

John B. Partin, Mayor
Rita Joyner, Vice Mayor
Michael Harris, Councilor
Susan Daye, Councilor
Malik Wheat, Councilor
Lovena Rapole, Councilor

REGULAR MEETING

City Manager's Report - Michael Rogers, Interim City Manager

The meeting began with the City Manager, Michael Rogers, addressing the mayor and council to open the evening's proceedings. He introduced the first agenda item, which was a presentation on water renewal efforts.

Hopewell Water Renewal Update - Matt Ellinghaus, Director of Hopewell Water Renewal
Matthew Ellinghaus, Director of Water Renewal, delivered an initial update to the mayor and council after approximately three weeks in his role, outlining both operational conditions and ongoing challenges within the city's water renewal system. He reported that, while there are notable operational and maintenance challenges—largely due to previously deferred maintenance—progress is being made through an active maintenance plan to restore processes and improve system performance incrementally. He also highlighted ongoing efforts to evaluate ammonia levels in preparation for stricter regulatory limits expected at the end of the current permit term. Compliance will require detailed studies and planning in coordination with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), with a formal plan due by the end of the year.

Ellinghaus discussed the status of the “fourth supplement,” which remains under negotiation and is expected to address billing structures, nitrogen allocation, and emergency funding provisions, and may also intersect with broader charter amendments and participation from additional jurisdictions, such as Prince George and Fort Lee. He acknowledged that further review is needed to determine how those entities may factor into cost-sharing or participation decisions. In response to council questions, he clarified that ammonia compliance issues affect both residential and industrial sources because of a single regulatory limit, which is expected to

decrease significantly, creating a substantial system-wide impact. He also noted uncertainty regarding eligibility for additional water quality improvement grants, but emphasized that all funding opportunities will be explored.

From a staffing perspective, Ellinghaus identified workforce shortages as a significant concern, with approximately 20% of positions vacant, reflecting a broader industry-wide challenge in recruiting qualified wastewater professionals. He briefly mentioned pump station and collection system updates, indicating that a more detailed report would be provided in the coming months. He then reviewed capital project progress, highlighting several completed upgrades—including elevator improvements, electrical switchgear replacement, and equipment rehabilitations—as well as numerous ongoing and planned projects tied to operational efficiency and regulatory compliance. He explained that some projects are categorized as “business case” items, meaning they are necessary but not immediately mandated, requiring prioritization based on timing, funding, and overall system needs.

Ellinghaus also provided an overview of the DEQ consent order resulting from violations identified in 2025. He explained that the order is currently in the public notice phase and is expected to be finalized by mid-April, at which point compliance timelines will formally begin. He noted that many required improvements are already underway or completed, positioning the city ahead of schedule in some respects. Importantly, he reported that no fines or penalties were imposed, allowing resources to remain focused on system improvements.

Council members engaged with questions regarding project prioritization, funding opportunities, and specific infrastructure concerns, such as the oxygen plant replacement, which Ellinghaus described as a medium priority due to the availability of alternative operational measures, albeit at a higher cost. The council expressed appreciation for Ellinghaus’s early progress and leadership, as well as for staff efforts and collaboration with DEQ. Members also acknowledged that current infrastructure challenges stem from years of underinvestment, while emphasizing support for ongoing efforts to modernize and strengthen the utility system. The discussion concluded with a brief update on the review process for operations and maintenance proposals, with evaluation scoring underway and further deliberations to follow.

Crime Summary Report – Gregory Taylor, Chief of Police

Police Chief Taylor presented the Police Department’s March Crime Center report, providing an overview of crime trends, departmental activity, and ongoing initiatives. He reported significant reductions in crime, noting that as of early March, violent crime had decreased by 40%, property crime by 6%, and overall major crime by 15%. Compared with 2023 benchmarks, the reductions were even more pronounced, with violent crime down 44%, property crime down 29%, and total major crime down 32%. He indicated that future reports will expand comparisons to include data from 2022 through 2026 to reflect trends since the implementation of new policing technologies.

In response to council questions, the Chief clarified that a recent homicide was not included in the report due to timing, as it occurred just outside the reporting period, and confirmed that a suspect is in custody and the case remains under investigation. He also provided updates on

public health-related incidents, reporting three total suspected opiate overdoses in 2026 so far (including one non-fatal incident during the current period), and a cumulative total of 67 overdoses—13 fatal and 54 non-fatal—since 2021. Additionally, he highlighted a dramatic reduction in verified shots-fired incidents, with only 3 recorded in 2026, compared with 54 in 2025 and 64 in 2024.

The Chief addressed staffing and recruitment challenges, noting vacancies in both police officer and emergency communications roles, though progress is being made through ongoing hiring efforts and recruitment events at local colleges and universities, as well as through community outreach programs. He detailed recent and upcoming engagement activities, including participation in career fairs and community events, and the launch of an eight-week Citizen Academy to increase public awareness and involvement. Community policing efforts remain steady, with plans to expand staffing in certain wards.

He also summarized results from a traffic speed study conducted near West End Christian School, which found no speeding violations during school hours and minimal violations overall, indicating effective compliance in that area. Finally, the Chief discussed a proposed federal earmark funding request of up to \$1 million to enhance public safety technology, including license plate reader systems, mobile surveillance units, and video integration tools. He noted that contingency plans are being explored in case the funding is not approved, including scaling back the project and identifying alternative financing options.

Council members expressed appreciation for the department’s progress in reducing crime and maintaining community safety, as well as for its outreach efforts. Additional comments highlighted the value of neighborhood watch meetings and interdepartmental collaboration, particularly with the fire department, and encouraged continued public participation in community engagement initiatives. The segment concluded with acknowledgment of strong community involvement in recent city events.

PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Prayer by Pastor Hart followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States by Mayor Partin.

Councilor Daye makes a motion to adopt the consent agenda. Councilor Wheat seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Absent
Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Wheat-	Yes
Councilor Rapole-	Yes
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes

Motion Passes 6-0

COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS

Mark Burroughs, Ward 3

Mark Burroughs addressed the council during public comment, beginning by expressing appreciation for the organization and execution of the recent town hall for city manager candidates. However, he raised concerns about council responsiveness to citizens, referencing a prior comment made by the City Manager and stating that while he did not accept the apology offered, he viewed the remark as an honest reflection of a broader issue. Burroughs conveyed that he and others feel their concerns are sometimes treated as a burden rather than a priority, emphasizing the importance of council members actively listening and valuing public input. While acknowledging that the current council may be performing better than some past leadership, he urged them to place greater weight on citizen perspectives, noting that governance should prioritize people over purely financial considerations.

He also addressed the Police Department's discussion of implementing Flock camera technology, recognizing its effectiveness in aiding criminal investigations in some jurisdictions. At the same time, he cautioned that certain communities across the country have chosen to discontinue its use, and he encouraged the council to further research potential concerns or drawbacks before making a financial commitment. He concluded by urging careful consideration of both the benefits and any possible issues associated with adopting such technology.

Ed Houser, Ward 5

Ed Houser spoke during public comment to raise concerns about the city's paving schedule in Ward Five. He questioned why Richmond Street and South 20th Street had been excluded from the planned paving work, noting that both streets are centrally located in the neighborhood and surrounded by roads scheduled for improvement. Houser stated that the condition of these streets is comparable to that of others that have been prioritized, and he expressed confusion and frustration over their omission. He urged the council to reconsider or explain the decision to skip these two roads, emphasizing the inconsistency in the current paving plan.

Mayor Partin responded to concerns about omitted streets in the paving schedule by explaining that the issue is part of a broader pattern affecting multiple neighborhoods. He noted that streets in areas such as Machen Hills and Appomattox Heights have similarly been overlooked. The Mayor attributed these gaps to delays in executing paving projects as originally planned, combined with inflation-driven cost increases, which have forced the city to make cuts and adjust priorities. He emphasized, however, that the city is aware of these omissions and is actively working to address them through additional paving efforts in the future.

Regular Business

R-1 - Local Choice (TLC) Annual Renewal - Yaosca Smith, Director of Human Services

Mary Jones presented the city's upcoming health insurance renewal options on behalf of HR and OneDigital, outlining a significant projected increase and proposed plan adjustments for council consideration. She reported that the renewal reflects a 15.7% increase in overall costs, nearly \$1 million, of which approximately \$800,000 would impact the city and about \$180,000 would affect employees. She noted that, given market conditions and plan performance, this increase is consistent with broader healthcare trends.

To mitigate the financial impact, Jones presented a recommended alternative plan design that would reduce the increase to approximately \$357,000 total, with about \$293,000 borne by the city and roughly \$64,000 by employees. This proposal includes offering three plan options—the Key Advantage 500, Key Advantage 1000, and a High-Deductible Health Plan—while eliminating the existing 250 plan. She explained that these adjustments are intended to balance cost control with maintaining competitive benefits.

Jones also outlined several changes that would take effect on July 1, regardless of the plan selected. These include modifications to prescription drug coverage, where tiers two through four will now require a \$150 deductible before copays apply, and tier four medications will shift to a coinsurance model with a capped cost. Additionally, GLP-1 medications will only be covered if tied to a qualifying medical condition, rather than for general weight loss purposes. Changes to the high-deductible plan were also noted, with slightly higher deductible thresholds required to remain compliant with IRS regulations for health savings account eligibility.

Further updates include expanding access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to all city employees, rather than limiting it to those enrolled in a specific plan. Jones concluded by reiterating the recommendation for council to consider the revised plan structure and contribution levels, noting that a decision is expected following further review in the coming weeks.

R-2 – Budget Presentation for Public Safety, Public Works, Information Technology, City Clerk, and Recreation and Parks – Stacey Jordan, Deputy City Manager

Public Safety: Police Chief Taylor returned to present an overview of the Hopewell Police Department's proposed budget and organizational structure. He began by outlining the department's mission to protect life and property and maintain public order, noting that operations are organized into three divisions—field services, administrative services, and support services—all reporting through the chain of command to the Deputy Chief and ultimately to the Chief. He detailed staffing levels, including 68 sworn officers (with 62 currently filled), 23 authorized full-time civilian positions (20 filled), and 8 part-time civilian roles (7 filled), emphasizing the department's reliance on both sworn and civilian personnel.

Focusing on performance indicators, the Chief highlighted projected increases in service demand. As of February 2026, the department had already handled over 10,000 911 calls for the fiscal year, with projections reaching 16,000 by year's end. He attributed this anticipated rise to the combined call volume for police, fire, and medical services, as well as increased public

confidence, leading to more reporting. Other projected increases included animal control calls (from approximately 2,000 to 3,000), physical arrests (from 402 to 700), building checks (from over 47,000 to 52,000), and accident reports (from 355 to 400). Some council members questioned the significant jump in projected 911 calls, and the Chief acknowledged it was a projection that could be discussed further.

He then outlined the department's proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year, which totals approximately \$14.86 million—an increase of about \$602,000 over the current budget. He clarified that the majority of this increase is attributable to salaries and benefits. Operational expense increases account for roughly \$158,000 and include higher costs for training contracts (such as with the regional criminal justice academy), as well as modest increases in supplies, including K-9 veterinary care.

The presentation concluded with confirmation that the proposed budget reflects both rising operational demands and personnel-related costs, and council members acknowledged the overview and asked only a few follow-up questions before moving on.

Fire Chief Ruppert presented the Fire Department's budget, beginning with a real-world incident to illustrate operational challenges. He described a recent structure fire response in which limited staffing and apparatus availability resulted in only a small team responding, well below the national standard of approximately 42 personnel for such incidents. While the situation was resolved without escalation, he emphasized that the outcome hinged on circumstances and highlighted the risks the department faces daily. He further explained that modern fire conditions, including the prevalence of synthetic materials, significantly accelerate fire growth, leaving roughly eight minutes to respond before conditions become unsurvivable.

Ruppert underscored ongoing operational strain due to high call volume and limited resources, noting that it is common for multiple units to be tied up simultaneously, particularly with EMS calls, which impacts overall response capability. He explained that while the department was asked to consider 5–10% budget cuts, the majority of its budget is tied to salaries and essential functions, leaving very little discretionary spending. As a result, even maintaining a flat budget effectively equates to a reduction due to rising costs for equipment, software, and supplies.

On the capital side, he identified several urgent infrastructure needs, including a failing sewer line at Station 2, ongoing structural and water issues at Station 1—which is nearing 100 years old—and a funding gap for a replacement burn building used for training. While a grant has been secured for the burn building, higher-than-expected bids have created a shortfall, and the project is being restructured to reduce costs.

The primary focus of his request was personnel. Ruppert proposed adding six firefighter positions at a cost of approximately \$59,000 for the first year, contingent on receiving a federal SAFER grant to offset most of the expense. These positions would allow the department to keep a new ladder truck in service consistently and begin transitioning to a revised shift schedule (from 24/48 to 24/72), aimed at reducing fatigue and improving firefighter health and safety. He outlined a four-year phased staffing plan, ultimately costing up to \$1.25 million annually when fully implemented, but noted that even partial implementation would yield meaningful benefits.

Ruppert supported the staffing proposal with data showing dramatic increases in call volume over time, significant after-hours demand, and the physical and mental health toll on firefighters, including reduced life expectancy and higher rates of illness and stress-related conditions. He emphasized that current schedules no longer align with modern operational demands and that adjustments are necessary to maintain both workforce well-being and service effectiveness.

Public Works: Monique Robertson presented the Public Works Department's operational budget, outlining the structure, funding sources, and key financial requests for the upcoming fiscal year. She explained that Public Works operates through two main divisions—Operations and Engineering/Stormwater—and manages four primary funding streams: the solid waste (refuse) fund, the perpetual care (cemetery) fund, general fund operations, and various federal and state funds. She highlighted the wide range of services provided, including refuse collection, citywide cleanups, snow and debris removal, event traffic control, and operation of the citizens' convenience center.

For the general operations budget, Robertson noted a modest increase of \$48,800, driven solely by rising utility costs, with internal adjustments made to offset higher expenses where possible. In contrast, the refuse fund is seeing a more substantial increase of approximately \$432,466, primarily due to contractual cost escalations tied to the consumer price index and a significant increase in billing contractor expenses. Additional cost variability is tied to tipping and hauling services at the convenience center, which fluctuate based on usage levels.

She reported no requested increases for the cemetery (perpetual care) fund, which remains steady at \$65,000, and no net increase for the stormwater fund, where internal reallocations were made to manage minor cost changes such as rent adjustments.

On the capital side of operations, Robertson outlined a total request of \$183,000, focused primarily on critical equipment and infrastructure needs. The largest item is a proposed seven-year lease for a new leaf vacuum truck to replace a 27-year-old unit that has far exceeded its useful life and incurred significant repair costs. Additional requests include \$20,000 for streetlight improvements (particularly for non-standard downtown lighting), \$50,000 to continue the ADA master planning process, and \$50,000 to complete HVAC upgrades at the social services building to address ongoing humidity issues.

She emphasized that other capital items are being deferred to future years, reflecting an effort to prioritize only the most urgent needs while maintaining fiscal restraint.

Josh Sementelli, serving as Interim Deputy Director of Public Works Engineering and Stormwater, presented the proposed Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for fiscal year 2027 to the mayor, vice mayor, and council. He began by outlining the structure of his department, which includes plan review staff, a three-person maintenance crew, and inspection and GIS personnel, all under his supervision along with oversight of CIP activities. He emphasized that for FY27, the department is largely requesting a rollover of existing funds rather than new funding, with the exception of a pavement preservation plan and a proposed Cattail Creek drainage crossing project that would rely partially on grant funding and proceed only if funds are secured.

Sementelli then reviewed individual projects. The Route 156 intersection improvement project, split into two codes, is in the preliminary engineering phase with utility surveys planned for the spring and summer, and a combined local share of about \$60,600. A pedestrian improvement project on South Mesa Drive is nearing advertisement for construction, expected to begin later in the year. The Route 10 shared-use path project is scheduled to move into the right-of-way phase by December, with construction anticipated in 2028 and a remaining local match of \$521,000. The Courthouse Road pedestrian improvement project is nearing completion of right-of-way acquisition and is expected to enter construction in the fall with a \$600,000 local share. Another Route 10 paving project at Hummel Ross Road is fully funded through the state's "State of Good Repair" program and will be reimbursed.

For stormwater initiatives, Sementelli discussed the Hanks Pond project, which is largely designed and awaiting funding, and the Heretick Avenue project funded through a general obligation bond. The latter is currently in the easement acquisition phase and may begin construction in the summer. Council discussion highlighted that additional federal earmarked funding of about \$1 million could offset local costs. Concerns were raised about property impacts and easements, particularly near the Farmingdale Townhomes area, where deteriorated infrastructure has caused sinkholes. Sementelli explained that new drainage and sanitary easements are required, and that staff are actively coordinating with residents and property managers. Councilmembers stressed the importance of communication with residents and suggested a groundbreaking ceremony due to the project's long delay and community impact.

The pavement preservation plan was also discussed, with Sementelli noting that an updated condition assessment by Timmons Group will guide future paving priorities. It was clarified that general obligation bond funding will supplement, not replace, existing rollover funds, contributing to a broader long-term paving strategy estimated at several million dollars. Finally, Sementelli introduced the Cattail Creek drainage improvement project, which has been delayed for years but now has a potential 75/25 grant funding structure, requiring a local match of about \$150,000. The project is still in the early design phase, and councilmembers inquired whether it represents the final phase of broader Cattail Creek improvements, to which Sementelli responded that he would confirm. He concluded by inviting questions and receiving acknowledgment from council on the significance of the projects presented.

IT: Rashad Biggs presented the IT Department's fiscal year budget, explaining that the department's primary mission is to support all other city departments, including police, fire, public works, and other municipal operations. He emphasized that IT functions as a service-oriented department, ensuring that all other departments have the technology infrastructure and support needed to operate effectively. For the upcoming fiscal year, he noted that the department is not undertaking any major new projects but is instead focused on maintaining and supporting existing systems.

Biggs highlighted that the budget reflects an overall increase of approximately 4.58% across various service contracts and vendor costs. The most significant increase comes from Microsoft Office 365, which is projected to cost around \$120,000 annually. Additionally, the transition to cloud-based services through Tyler Technologies will result in an \$82,000 annual increase. He also discussed the implementation of Duo multifactor authentication, which is required to meet

state security mandates, particularly for the police department. This system ensures that users must verify their identity through an additional authentication step when accessing the city's network via VPN, thereby enhancing cybersecurity. Biggs concluded his brief presentation without further discussion, as council members had no questions.

City Clerk: Deputy City Clerk Sade' Allen presented a brief overview of the City Clerk's Office budget for fiscal year 2027. She explained that the approved budget for FY26 was \$193,035, while the requested budget for FY27 is \$195,035.80, representing a modest increase of approximately \$2,000. Allen noted that this increase is primarily due to the addition of advertising costs related to economic development initiatives, which is the only significant change in the department's budget. During the discussion, a councilmember sought clarification on whether this adjustment effectively results in savings on the Commonwealth's Attorney's (ADA's) side, to which Mr. Rogers confirmed that it does. The presentation concluded with acknowledgment from council and no further questions.

Recreation and Parks: Tabitha Martinez presented the Recreation and Parks Department's fiscal year 2027 budget, emphasizing both operational needs and strategic improvements while keeping the presentation concise. She began by noting the department's structure, which includes six divisions, and highlighted a key one-time capital request for a new ADA-accessible bus. She explained that the department's current vehicles, dating back to 2004 and 2005, have exceeded their useful life, with one already inoperable and the other frequently under repair, leading to rising maintenance costs. This replacement is critical because the department provides over 50 transportation trips annually for seniors, including daily programming and excursions, but current limitations restrict travel to within a 20-mile radius, reducing opportunities for participants.

Martinez then outlined several capital improvement priorities, including upgrades to Mathis Field supported by a potential congressional earmark, pavilion roof renovations at high-use locations like Crystal Lake and the Water Park, resurfacing of courts and playgrounds, and the addition of a child-friendly bike training area in parks. She also identified needed parking lot improvements at the Hopewell Community Center and Water Soccer Complex, as well as enhancements to the department's shared maintenance shop, where staff currently lack adequate climate-controlled and sanitary break space.

She explained that the department conducted an internal budget review to minimize new costs by reallocating existing funds. This includes restructuring part-time roles, such as lifeguards, into a full-time Aquatics Program Senior Specialist to support expanded programming demand, and converting other part-time and supervisory roles into a Park Maintenance Senior Specialist with a focus on horticulture to better manage growing park assets like Crystal Lake, the Riverwalk, and sports complexes. The total cost for these staffing adjustments is approximately \$126,780, with \$37,549 covered through internal reallocation, leaving a net request of about \$89,230.80.

Martinez also addressed revenue projections, noting the department is currently trending just under 4% and aims to increase to at least 7% next fiscal year, potentially reaching 10%. This would generate an additional \$88,242 in revenue, nearly offsetting the requested budget increase.

She concluded by offering to answer questions, but none were raised, and council acknowledged the presentation.

R-3 – Public Hearing – Conditional Use Permit for 332-B Maryland Avenue (First Reading)

– Chris Ward, Director of Planning and Development

Chris Ward presented a conditional use permit (CUP) request for a property located at 332B Maryland Avenue (Parcel 024-0335), owned by Robert Durkey and applied for by Ashley Turner. The property is situated in Ward Two within a B-3 zoning district, and the request seeks approval to operate an auto repair shop at that location. Ward noted that this is a public hearing and first reading, and reminded council that recent ordinance changes now require a CUP for this type of use due to potential impacts associated with auto-related businesses.

He outlined several concerns typically tied to auto repair operations, including parking limitations, outdoor storage, noise and air pollution, handling of hazardous materials, waste disposal, safety risks, aesthetic considerations, and the potential for increased theft or vandalism. In response, the applicant argued that local auto repair businesses support the local economy, stabilize property values, and provide essential neighborhood services, while committing to maintaining a clean, safe, and environmentally responsible operation.

Ward highlighted that the property itself has limited on-site parking, but the applicant has secured a shared parking agreement across the street to address this issue. He also noted that while an auto repair business previously operated at the site, it lost its nonconforming status after failing to maintain a valid business license for over two years, requiring the new applicant to go through the CUP process rather than being grandfathered in. Additionally, the property includes an accessory building that can be used for indoor storage of materials and equipment.

Based on these factors, staff recommended approval of the permit with several conditions, including maintaining a clean exterior, prohibiting outdoor storage or display of materials, requiring all repair work to occur indoors, ensuring the parking agreement remains valid, removing or storing inoperable vehicles within 30 days, and complying with all applicable laws and regulations. Ward concluded by noting that one public comment had been received in opposition to the request and offered to answer any questions from council.

Ms. Turner addressed the council in support of her application for a conditional use permit and business license to operate an auto repair shop at the Maryland Avenue location. She respectfully requested approval, emphasizing her intent to provide honest, reliable, and affordable automotive repair services to local residents. She assured council that the business would be operated in a clean, professional, and well-maintained manner, fully complying with all city ordinances, safety standards, and environmental regulations.

In her remarks, Ms. Turner highlighted the community benefits of the proposed shop, noting that it would help meet the growing demand for local vehicle repair services while also contributing to the local economy through job creation. She expressed pride in being a responsible business owner and neighbor, and conveyed her commitment to maintaining a positive presence in the

area. She concluded by asking council for approval to move forward with establishing a business that would serve both the city and its residents.

The mayor formally opened the public hearing for the conditional use permit request. It was noted that only one individual, Mark Burrows, had signed up to speak; however, he was no longer present. With no additional public comments, the public hearing was promptly closed. Council then moved forward to the next step in the process.

Vice Mayor Joyner makes a motion to approve the CUP request from Ashley Turner to operate an auto repair business on parcel number 014-335, also identified as 332-B Maryland Avenue, with the conditions noted under the staff recommendations. Councilor Harris seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Absent
Councilor Daye-	Yes
Councilor Wheat-	Yes
Councilor Rapole-	Yes
Vice Mayor Joyner-	Yes

Motion Passes 6-0

R-4 – Resolution for a Grant Waiver Request for Parcel #0330791 – Joshua Sementelli, Interim Director of Public Works

Joshua Sementelli presented a request for a waiver related to the development of an unopened street, in accordance with Section 33-8 of the city’s Streets and Sidewalks Code. He explained that the code allows City Council to grant an exemption from developing such a road if the parcel in question is located on a corner lot and the unopened street functions as a side street. He referenced the specific parcel under consideration and noted that supporting documentation, including a letter from the applicant, Mr. Taylor, had been provided.

Sementelli stated that city staff, along with the city’s on-call engineering firm, had reviewed the request and found no issues or reasons to deny the exemption. Based on this evaluation, staff recommended that council approve the waiver and allow the property to proceed without requiring development of the unopened street. After the presentation, council was given the opportunity to ask questions, but none were raised.

Councilor Wheat makes a motion to grant the waiver request as presented. Vice Mayor Joyner seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Harris-	Yes
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Councilor Ellis-	Absent
Councilor Daye-	Yes

Councilor Wheat- Yes
Councilor Rapole- Yes
Vice Mayor Joyner- Yes

Motion Passes 6-0

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully Submitted,

Sade' Allen

Sade' Allen, City Clerk

Johnny Partin
Johnny Partin, Mayor

