

**MINUTES OF THE October 12, 2023 CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL
MEETING**

A SPECIAL meeting of the Hopewell City Council was held on Tuesday
October 12, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: John B. Partin, Mayor
 Jasmine Gore, Vice Mayor (Virtual)
 Rita Joyner, Councilor
 Michael Harris, Councilor (Virtual)
 Janice Denton, Councilor
 Brenda Pelham, Councilor
 Dominic Holloway, Councilor (Late)

Councilor Joyner makes a motion to allow Vice Mayor Gore and Councilor Harris to participate in meeting by zoom, Councilor Pelham seconds the motion.

Roll Call:	Councilor Pelham -	Yes
	Councilor Joyner -	Yes
	Mayor Partin -	Yes
	Councilor Denton -	Yes
	Councilor Harris -	Abstain
	Vice Mayor Gore -	Abstain

Motion Passes 4-0

CLOSED MEETING:

Councilor Joyner makes a motion to go into closed session pursuant to Va. Code Section § 2.2-371 1 (A)(I) to discuss and consider personnel matters, including board and commission appointments; the assignment and

performance of specific appointee and employees of City Council, and to the extent such discussion will be aided thereby, motion is seconded by Councilor Pelham

Roll Call:	Councilor Pelham -	Yes
	Councilor Joyner -	Yes
	Councilor Harris -	Yes
	Mayor Partin -	Yes
	Vice Mayor Gore -	Yes
	Councilor Denton -	Yes

Motion Passes 6-0

Reconvene Open Session

Councilor Holloway makes a motion to come out of closed session motion is seconded by Councilor Joyner.

Roll Call:	Councilor Pelham -	Yes
	Councilor Joyner -	Yes
	Councilor Holloway -	Yes
	Councilor Harris -	Yes
	Mayor Partin -	Yes
	Vice Mayor Gore -	Yes
	Councilor Denton -	Yes

Motion Passes 7-0

CERTIFICATION:

Immediately thereafter, council responded to the question pursuant to Virginia § 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 closed meeting?

Roll Call:

Councilor Pelham -	Yes
Councilor Joyner -	Yes
Councilor Holloway -	Yes
Councilor Harris -	Yes
Mayor Partin -	Yes
Vice Mayor Gore -	Yes
Councilor Denton -	Yes

Motion Passes 7-0

WORK SESSION

WS -1

Robert Bobb begins his presentation by highlighting challenges, showcasing progress made to date, and outlining actionable strategies for future financial recovery and transformation. Mr. Bobb introduces Heather and allows her to begin to present. She begins by giving a brief overview of where they are currently. She states the last annual comprehensive financial report and single audit was in FY 2019, but the last unmodified opinion was in FY 14. Recently she states the auditor of public accounts was unable to evaluate the financial mentality of the city. So far they have completed current state assessment and finalizing financial walk-thru' s. They have tracked 2015 to

2019 audit findings for mediation. Before fixing reconciliations for 2020 forward, they have to start by closing the findings by the auditors from 2015 to 2019. She states they identified 93 additional issues for remediation across the departments. They have met with all 4 industry partners as well as the Beacon Theatre. They have briefed twice the commonwealth secretary of finance and visited the state auditor's office. They have completed a full assessment of MUNIS. They have worked with and collaborated with external auditors. They are not starting their audit preparation work starting with 2020. Councilor Pelham asks Ms. Heather if 2015-2019 if they are still tracking or is it tracked completely. Heather stated they have outlined the findings and they now have to through and close the findings. Councilor Holloway asks is there a little over 500 findings total, Mr. Bobb stated he does not have the exact number, but Heather stated she can get that number and provided the number to be 44 audit findings and 93 of their own, making a total of 137. Mr. Jack steps up to give his presentation in relation to the audit. He gives two streams. One to fix the numbers, and the second is to fix the porosities. Mr. Jack walks council through what they are doing to clean up the old numbers. He has a core team which is the treasurer office. He goes into detail what all they are going through with the treasurer. His second team is his grant team, which is the money that came in under ARPA that includes money from the state every year as well. His third team is his enterprise team which deals with water, solid waste and storm water. He has been able to identify certain reports the city has been obtaining but was unsure how to optimize their use within the MUNIS environment. He goes into what the timeline for this is. He mentions the goal is to get an unmodified audit opinion which will be when the auditor says the finical statement present fairly in all material respects the financial condition of the city. In order to get that rendered in 2020 you need an anchoring point for the beginning of the year. He mentions if everything is done right they will finish the 2020 audit and 2021 remediation work, and then roll over and start 2021 audit, and Mr. Jack's team will begin the 2022 remediation. Councilor Pelham asked during all corrections is there anywhere on the audit is there anywhere to show notations of what the corrections were. Mr. Jack answers the question. Ms. Heather comes back up to discuss the MUNIS system and how it was designed and what it is meant to do. She goes over how to fix the issues; she states they are going to work with RP team and while doing financial closing cost and procedures the RP team is going to put automated

controls in place. They are recommending enhanced ERP security and work flow rules and separation of duties. They would like to change the work flow to avoid being in this situation again. She mentions they are also working on training to ensure everyone knows how to do their job correctly to avoid running into any of these issues again. Councilor Pelham asked is Tyler used in DSS as well. Ms. Heather and Jack answered that Tyler is the company that developed MUNIS. Councilor Pelham then asked is there a time keeping system. Ms. Heather answers in detail based on her provided slides. Vice Mayor Gore stated she is concerned with the different modules that were purchased and not being used, and she thought they would be getting implemented. She asked has any of the new modules been started yet. Ms. Heather answered that some were started and scrapped for lack of adoption. Vice Mayor Gore then asked Dr. Manker the same question. Dr. Manker responded to Vice Mayor that the system did not allow many of the modules to be used. Vice Mayor asked did any modules start or were they implemented at all. Heather responds that they do not have evidence of that but they did not look for it. Vice Mayor asked did they see any evidence if the modules were in process to be developed. Ms. Heather responded that evidence was they were implemented but they couldn't use them effectively so it was back tracked to do it manually in another system. Mr. Holloway states he was confused between vice mayor and Heather because the vice mayor addressed the issues of the admin of council giving directions to departments and not following, but he thought Heather said in return the implementation could not be carried out as a whole if other departments or processes weren't done properly. So even though it was the intention, if other departments could not do it, then it couldn't be done. There was an open discussion between council and Robert Bobb in regards to this. Mr. Bobb speaks again to say for the city to thrive its imperative to maintain good relationships with their industry partners. He wants to ensure up to date operation capital reconciliation and prioritize the timely updates. They go into further detail of how they will fix the numbers and fix the process to reach the goal of a good strong reconciliation. Vice Mayor Gore asked Mr. Jack did he notice the way some departments have historically operated is in silos and breaking down communication and how it feeds into larger picture. Mr. Jack responds in detail to the Vice Mayor about the data and how it is supposed to move. Vice Mayor then asked Mr. Bobb are they going to get what is being asked of them to stop discussion and to get clarity to address

the concerns to put a pause to the complaints. Mr. Bobb responds to Vice Mayor in detail.

Councilor Joyner makes a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: 7 Aye

0 Nay

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brittani Williams", written over a horizontal line.

Brittani Williams, City Clerk

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Johnny Partin", written over a horizontal line.
Johnny Partin, Mayor