

February 2, 2021
Special City Council Meeting

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 2, 2021

A Special Meeting of the City Council of the City of Hopewell, Virginia, was held Tuesday, February 2, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom.

PRESENT: Patience Bennet, Mayor — (arrived 6:37pm)
Johnny Partin, Vice-Mayor
Brenda Pelham, Councilor
Deborah Randolph, Councilor
Arlene Holloway, Councilor
Jasmine Gore, Councilor (arrived 6:33pm)
Janice Denton, Councilor

John Altman, Jr., City Manager
Sandra Robinson, City Attorney

ROLL CALL

Vice-Mayor Partin called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. Roll call was taken as follows:

Mayor Bennett	-	present
Vice Mayor Partin	-	present
Councilor Randolph	-	present
Councilor Holloway	-	present
Councilor Gore	-	present
Councilor Denton	-	present
Councilor Pelham		
City Manager Altman	-	present
City Attorney Robinson	-	present

WELCOME

— it is noted that Mayor Bennett is having technical issues.

CLOSED MEETING

Motion was made by Councilor Denton, seconded by Councilor Pelham, and unanimously passed to convene into Closed Session meeting pursuant to Va. Code Sections 2.2- 371 1 (A)(1) to discuss and consider personnel matters, including the interview, and appointment of prospective candidates(s) for employment (City Clerk).

Councilor Denton	-	yes
Councilor Pelham	-	yes
YCS Mayor Bennett	-	yes
Councilor Randolph	-	YCS
Councilor Holloway	-	yes
Vice-Mayor Partin		
Councilor Gore	-	yes

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OPEN MEEETING

Motion to come out of closed session by Mayor Bennett and seconded by Councilor Randolph.

Councilor Denton -yes Councilor Pelham -
yes Mayor Bennett - yes
Councilor Randolph - yes
Councilor Holloway
Vice Mayor Partin - yes Councilor Gore
- yes

Council convened into Open Session. Councilors responded to the question: "Were the only matters discussed in the Closed Meeting public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements; and public business matters identified in the motion 10 convene into Closed Session?" Upon the roll call, the vote resulted:

Councilor Pelham — amended the agenda to move forward to next Tuesday, seconded by Councilor Gore Mayor Bennett reconvened the meeting.

Councilor Denton - no
Councilor Pelham - yes
Mayor Bennett - no
Councilor Randolph - no
Councilor Holloway - yes Vice Mayor
Partin ..no
Councilor Gore - yes

Moved to recess for 5 minutes to 7:37pm - moved by Councilor Gore and seconded by Vice-Mayor Partin.

Councilor Denton - yes Councilor
Pelham_ yes Mayor Bennett -
yes Councilor Randolph_ yes
Councilor Holloway - yes Vice Mayor
Partin - yes
Councilor Gore - yes

Mayor Bennett - asked if the agenda needed to be adopted when a special meeting is called.

City Attorney Robinson - indicated yes, it is customary to adopt an agenda.

Councilor Gore - asked if this issue is proper to be on the agenda given that it has been on our previous agendas,

City Attorney Robinson - has opined that the rules arc proper for a special meeting; only wrinkle is that it was a topic of a work session. City Attorney discussed charter provision to call a special meeting.

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Moved to adopt agenda to move matter forward — by Councilor Pelham and seconded by Councilor Gore.

Councilor Denton	-	no
Councilor Pelham	-	yes
Mayor Bennett	..	no
Councilor Randolph	-	no
Councilor Holloway	..	yes
Vice-Mayor Partin	-	no
Councilor Gore	-	yes

Mayor Partin - turned the meeting over to Councilor Denton who discussed what her objective was for the meeting.

Councilor Denton — Rule 105 Voting Methods; there IS nowhere in the rules that define discipline or misconduct. Would like for City Council to agree to work with City Attorney to develop an ordinance.

Moved to work with City Attorney to draft an ordinance to address misconduct.

City Attorney Robinson — motion is vague; is there a majority of Council to develop ordinance?

Moved to determine if misconduct by any Councilor should be a part of the Council Rules — moved by Councilor Denton and seconded by Vice-Mayor Partin.

Councilor Denton	-	yes
Councilor Pelham	-	no
Mayor Bennett	-	yes
Councilor Randolph	-	yes
Councilor Holloway	-	no
Vice-Mayor jPartin	-	yes
Councilor Gore	-	no

Councilor Randolph - believes that City Council should set a Council on Ethics Committee; thought to have sub-committee to work with City Attorney to develop proposals to bring back to Council.

Councilor Pelham - asked how ***** is most times if there is a sub-committee that they review and taking a recommendation back to the body,

Councilor Gore - can't support because Ethics Committee has not been established, no framework, in name only; also concerned with politics.

Councilor Holloway - stated Ethics Committec should be established first before meeting.

Councilor Randolph — do have an established Ethics Committec with no guidelines; once a majority of Council decides then it should go to the Committee to work with the city Attorney; I feel motion on the floor is the way to go; supports motion on floor.

Mayor Bennett recognized City Attorney Robinson.

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City Attorney Robinson there is and was an Ethics Committee formed prior to my arrival; process would be if committee was properly formed, if there is no charge then Council needs to provide guidelines to follow prior to; committee can't create its own guidelines.

Councilor Gore — my opinion still stands; committee has never given rules/guidelines; would ask this be put on next regular meeting.

Councilor Denton — Rule 203

Move to change Rule 203 to limit speaking to 3 minutes and maximum of 2 items per Councilor — moved by Councilor Denton and seconded by Vice-Mayor Partin,

Councilor Denton	-	yes
Councilor Pelham	-	no
Mayor Bennett	-	yes
Councilor Randolph	-	yes
Councilor Holloway	-	no
Vice-Mayor Partin	-	yes
Councilor Gore	-	no

Councilor Gore I placed this item on agenda to be reduced; what has changed your mind on it this time?

Councilor Denton I have always thought that 10 minutes is too long.

Councilor Gore — Thank you for bringing it back up.

Councilor Randolph — I have changed my mind and we need to adhere to this issue; will support.

Mayor Bennett — I always support 10 minutes, given its Black History Month, I will always oppose limiting speech.

Councilor Holloway supports 10 minutes.

Councilor Denton — Rule 303 Agenda, [as] sentence "The final draft shall be prepared.. .to City Manager, City Attorney, Mayor and Vice-Mayor (see PowerPoint for language) and make informational presentations as a separate item with a time limit of 10 minutes each, eliminate initial requests under City Council Reports.

Mayor Bennett asked for a point of order, the presentation was not a part of the amendment.

Move to amend Rule 303 as presented (see PowerPoint) moved by Councilor Denton and seconded by Mayor Bennett.

Councilor Denton	-	yes
Councilor Pelham	-	no
Mayor Bennett	-	yes
Councilor Randolph	-	yes
Councilor Holloway	-	yes
Vice-Mayor Partin	-	yes
Councilor Gore	-	no

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Councilor Gore — striking 2/3 majority lowers ability to have democratic process and allows majority control over the agenda.

Councilor Denton this is what we have been doing since I have been on City Council*

Councilor Denton — motion to remove proclamation/resolution/presentation from consent to a stand alone informational presentation with 10 minute lit-nit prior to PH. Moved by Councilor Denton and seconded by Vice Mayor Partin.

Councilor Denton	-	
Councilor Pelham	-	yes
Mayor Bennett	-	yes
Councilor Randolph	-	yes
Councilor [(okioway	-	
Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
Councilor Gore	-	yes

Councilor Randolph — where would this go on the agenda?

Councilor Denton — it would be the next item on the consent agenda before PH and unfinished business.

Councilor Pelham — it seems that resolutions are *** items and should be on consent, are you moving out of consent agenda?

Councilor Denton — would be a separate item not a part of consent

Councilor Pelham — Madam City Attorney, is this appropriate?

City Attorney Robinson yes ma'am

Councilor Gore — is this the same as we discussed previously; is this a separate section that needs to be approved?

City Attorney Robinson — It would be appraised as part of the whole agenda when approved.

Councilor Denton — Rule 303 from under report of Council - illuminate initial request and CCR and give each Councilor the opportunity to recommend items of interest for a future City Council meeting with the approval of City Council and asking the City Manager to research and bring back a recommendation ... seconded by Mayor Bennett.

Councilor Pelham — can we discuss without a motion?

City Attorney Robinson — in a workshop - yes

Vice-Mayor Partin — if a citizen brought an item to a Council would we have to have Council approve then wait 2 weeks to refer to City Manager; lit-nits speech

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Councilor Gore — asked City Manager to repeal motion

City Manager Altman — restated the motion

Councilor Randolph asked City Attorney if commilLcc

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City Attorney Robinson — answered

Councilor Gore if we have a citizen issue or upcoming meeting; would all 7 members have to go through process?

Councilor Denton — Yes

Councilor Gore - how is this different from our current process? If we have to get permission to place an item on the agenda then that is censorship,

Mayor Bennett — passed gavel to Vice Mayor Partin to speak; addressed IRS and ECRS; would like to commence to have the ability to place items on the agenda but not to IRS, but should limit the that each Councilor can place on the agenda to the consideration of time.

Mayor Bennett limiting people's right as an official', now did Vice-Mayor get involved.

Amended motion — leave CCR's on the agenda. Motion by Councilor Pelham seconded by Councilor Holloway

Move to amend the motion. Moved by Mayor Bennett, seconded by Councilor Randolph.

Councilor	yes
Councilor	
Mayor Bennett	
Councilor R	yes
Councilor Holloway	yes
Vice Mayor Partin	
Councilor Gore	

Councilor Randolph — agree with Mayor Bennett would like to remove IRS & CCRs and keep Council Request and limit the minutes of CRS.

Amend M 0 IRS & CCRs and now CRS with limit of 2 per Councilor until they are acted upon

Move to amend amended.

Move to extend meeting to complete this moved by Councilor Denton and seconded by Mayor Bennett.

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Councilor Denton
Councilor
Mayor Bennett - yes
Councilor Randolph - yes
Councilor Holloway - yes
Vice Mayor Martin - yes
Councilor Gore - Mayor
Councilor

Move to delete IRS CCRs from agenda. ^{yes} la have CRS on the agenda, limit Councilors to 2 CRS and any one council agenda per councilor — moved by Councilor Randolph and seconded by Vice-Mayor Martin.

Councilor Denton - yes

Councilor Bennett - yes

Mayor Bennett - yes

Councilor Denton -

Councilor Denton -

Vice Mayor Martin - yes

Councilor Denton -

Councilor Denton — ask a point of information of how CCRs were handled of City Manager.

City Manager Altman — revised CCRs were handled ***previously

Councilor Gore — no in favor of motion because limits number of CRS, it is censorship; limited ward representation.

Councilor Denton — point of order to motion

Mayor Bennett — overruled

Councilor Denton — point of order Councilor is beyond motion.

Councilor Gore — asked for a friendly amendment to require Council vote

Councilor Randolph — will not accept friendly amendment

Councilor Randolph — I cannot make a motion of Council vote

Councilor Gore would you commit to not skip it

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Councilor Randolph — I cannot

Vice Mayor Partin — call for the vote. by Vice Mayor Partin and seconded by Councilor Gore — 7-0

Councilor Gore asked for her comments regarding the friendly amendment in the minutes and her position for voting 'no'.

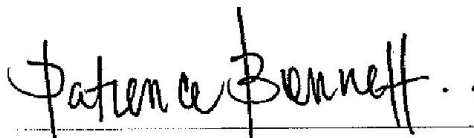
Councilor Randolph — asked for same

Mayor Bennett — asked for the same

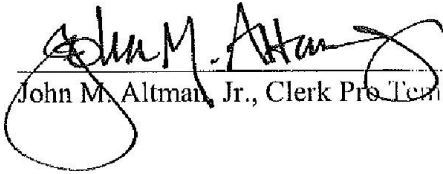
Councilor Gore — point of order from City Attorney Robinson — are the amended rules going to take effect immediately?

City Attorney Robinson — would be effective for, except (Feb.) meeting because agenda deadline has past.

ADJOURN


Patience Bennett, Mayor

Meeting was adjourned at 9pm


John M. Altman, Jr., Clerk Pro Tem