

MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 08, 2024, CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

A REGULAR meeting of the Hopewell City Council was held on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT:

John B. Partin, Jr. Mayor (Absent)
Jasmine Gore, Vice Mayor (Absent)
Rita Joyner, Councilor
Michael Harris, Councilor
Janice Denton, Councilor
Brenda Pelham, Councilor
Dominic Holloway, Councilor

CLOSED MEETING:

Councilor Holloway makes a motion to go into a closed meeting under Va. Code Section § 2.2-371 1 (A)(30) to discuss and consider personnel matters, including board and commission appointments; the assignment and performance of specific appointees and employees of City Council, and Va. Code Section § 2.2-3711 (A)(1) 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. Councilor Denton seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 5-0

Reconvene Open Meeting

Councilor Holloway makes a motion to reconvene an open meeting. Councilor Harris seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 5-0

CERTIFICATION:

CERTIFICATION under 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 a closed meeting?

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 5-0

WORK SESSION

WS-1 – Economic Development Strategic Plan– Charles Bennett- Economic Development Director

Charles Bennett, Economic Development Director, opened the presentation, showing for the first time a draft of the strategic economic development plan they have been working on with a group from the Economic Development Authority and a workgroup with the city council. Mr. Bennett introduced the document to the council and said he was not calling for action. He stated he is not going to read the document word for word but will go over the overall structure of the document and come back in a future meeting to present an updated final document. He explained he would like to have some feedback now, and after the meeting, the council should take the document and spend some time with it. He discussed the key areas we need to focus on to get there over the next 10 years, sharing the goals and missions of this plan, unique assets as a city, and some of the areas of Opportunities; however, he also recognized the reality of some of the constraints that we have. Mr. Bennett shared on the document the vision for the future of Hopewell in 2034; if successful, 10 years from now, it would be the reality that we would be living in by 2034. He shared some things that would be seen around the city, such as the amenities, infrastructure improvements, and historical assets being fully developed. He also shared more improvements that would be seen in the community. He explained it's a vision that paints a picture of where we want to be. He stated we have to ask ourselves as a city what our role is and what we do as a city. He explained that the city's economic development rests on the back of the foundation, which is built from human development leadership and community development. He explained that if you think about economic development, it is the crop that grows out of the seeds planted and watered and cultivated through human development, leadership development, and community development, and that's how you sustain long-term economic development. He would like to focus on our business corridors. The riverfront district downtown, Citywide housing, history and tourism, healthcare, education and workforce development, and others. He discussed the goals and objectives and how they are broken down in every city area. He explained they want to connect our future budget planning and the future focus into areas that can collectively be a catalyst and encourage the velocity in the areas that would have people come alongside and make those investments, so it's not just the city alone. He shared that we are doing our part to lead the way, make things ready for the additional private investment that would come, and expand some of the secondary commercial corridors, including some of the historic commercial corridors such as Arlington Road 15th Street Corridor, City Point Rd., and West Broadway Ave. Mr. Bennett discussed the riverfront and riverfront activities. Sharing housing is key to the need for places where people can live at all levels and diverse housing. There

needs to be an inventory of housing appealing to people who are at the end of their careers or the end of their lives and don't want to cut grass or deal with that type of maintenance. Still, we also have housing for growing families with plenty of young people who can push a mower. He then shares the healthcare and strategies for growing and attracting more healthcare providers into the city and making space for them to be in history and tourism. He stated this area has been a destination for business since 1613 and wants to ensure that it continues. Last Friday, there was a fantastic Made in Hopewell event in the industrial and manufacturing base. He stated on page 13 that they talk about education and the different opportunities to expand education, how to be a lifelong learner, and how to provide those partnerships and places in Hopewell. Mr. Bennett discussed his experiences with intentional landscaping and how you can tell the lighting and signage are intentional. Even though the city is older, the experience can be changed. He explained the quality of life and amenities as he wrapped up the presentation, talking about attracting new artisans and musicians to celebrate the fact that Hopewell is so diverse. It is a great strength, and the diversity should be increased. He ended the presentation by sharing that he would love feedback between now and the next council meeting on areas that may need to be addressed or something that may need to be added. We can focus on this area yearly with our investment and build a work plan around the budget season. He also shared a grant was applied for the University of Virginia Housing Community Impact. The grant is working with owners to get approval, and the crater planning district is the fiscal agent, which is one of the tasks under advancing Cavalier Square. Every year, they would be revised, changed, and could be referred to and focused on different occasions. He ended by offering to answer any questions the council had.

Councilor Pelham expressed her gratitude for all the successful efforts, understanding that Made in Hopewell was a successful event and appreciating the effort to bring the city forward.

Councilor Holloway also thanked Mr. Bennett for his hard work and for always crediting the other directors he met with to ensure holistic progress.

REGULAR MEETING

Councilor Pelham calls the Regular Meeting to order

PRESENT:

John B. Partin Jr., Mayor (Absent)
Jasmine Gore, Vice Mayor (Absent)
Rita Joyner, Councilor
Michael Harris, Councilor
Janice Denton, Councilor
Brenda Pelham, Councilor
Dominic Holloway, Councilor

Prayer by Minister Charles Bennett, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilor Pelham

Councilor Denton makes a motion to adopt the agenda, and Councilor Harris seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 5-0

Councilor Denton makes a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda seconded by Councilor Holloway.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 5-0

INFORMATION AND PRESENTATIONS

Update on Classification and compensation study – Yaosca Smith, HR Director

As the HR Director approaches, Concetta thanks the council for approving the FY25 budget for a compensation study. The study will help the city learn where their pay inequities are at the end of the research, and they will present a plan for implementation to the council. Mrs. Smith approaches the council and discusses a brief overview of how they got to this point of forming a committee. She speaks about the vendor who was selected and who was selected to be on the committee. Evergreen Solutions director is present, and Mrs. Smith gives him the floor to discuss their process. He provides a brief background of who Evergreen is and lets the council know the steps to get to the final result. He enables the council to know his company has done more than 1,300 different studies in the past. He reviews an overview of some of their experiences in Virginia and mentions that Virginia is one of the states where they primarily work. He lets the council know they have about six different steps that they would use to get through the imitation down to the final steps. He then goes through his slides to discuss each step in detail. He lets the council know his team will be on-site, speaking with city employees and asking about the challenges that they may face. He enables the council to understand that the overall timeline takes about four and a half months to complete. They have already begun working and look forward to finishing early next year. Councilor Holloway asks when the study is complete and if the team is available to ask questions. He confirms to the council they will be available once it's complete to ask any questions they may have. They will have a full year of support to have a complete cycle to help with any budget adjustments to salaries. Councilor Pelham asked when the committee was comprised if any mid-level salary employees were considered to be on it. Dr. Manker stated the original committee was to select the vendor, but now they will start picking various people to go through the process.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS

1. Denise Crandell: She came to the council to speak on the noise ordinance regarding the pump station that has been down for 3 years. She states that the noise is all day and all night long. It is so loud that they cannot open their windows or have a movie night outside because the generator is constantly going. She played a snippet to the council so they could get an idea of how

loud the noise was and told the council it was becoming very stressful.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PH1 – Conditional use permit for 3000 Davison Ave – Chris Ward

Chris began his presentation by explaining what the CUP is about; he provided the council with a PowerPoint explaining the dimensions of his request. He let the council know the contractor was available to answer questions at the end of his presentation. He details the lot and that two lots are planning to be joined together. He let the council know the conditions of this house's requirements are the dwelling will have roof eaves of 12 inches min; the home will have 4 in wide trim around all windows on the front of the house; the lot will have a tree canopy coverage of 20%, driveway of asphalt or concrete, brick foundation on all sides, foundation plantings along the front, generally the house will be in substantial conformance with the plans and elevations he showed. A public hearing was opened for any public questions or concerns; there were none, and a public hearing was closed.

Councilor Holloway moves to accept the conditional use permit with the stated conditions; Councilor Joyner seconds the motion.

Councilor Pelham asks questions regarding this particular home's floor plan and windows. The floor plan was provided to the council to help them understand where the windows will be.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 5-0

PH2 – Proposed changes to developmental planning application fees – Chris Ward, Planning and Development Director

Mr. Ward begins his presentation by letting the council know the zoning ordinance amendment is a proposal to increase development fees. He briefly reviews his

presentation to the council, reminding them this was discussed two work sessions ago. Developers, real estate investors, and business owners are primary applicants. Mr. Ward mentioned that the staff proposed the following fee structure: The fee structure is \$550 for the site plan. Staff will provide comments after the first review; there is no charge to address initial comments. The problem comes after applicants have addressed initial remarks, and that is called design by review, which gets expensive and takes a lot of time. The goal is to minimize that for additional fees for third and subsequent submittals. Staff recommends rezoning at \$1,500.00 for an application for variances, special exceptions, special use permits at \$500, conditional use permits at \$650, and a zoning ordinance amendment at \$1,000.00. He reminds the council that any vote this evening would be amending article 22, and he requests that should this pass, he asks this take effect beginning November 1, 2024.

Councilor Pelham asks why they don't charge for the second visit to avoid a third visit. Mr. Ward states that it is natural for there to be comments on the first submission and things to be corrected. He mentions he is almost 99.9 percent sure there will be initial comments every time. This is the reason for not charging the second time, but if the initial comments are not resolved by the third time, they will be charged at that time.

Councilor Holloway makes a motion to amend Article 22 to increase the following fees: Rezoning: 1,500, Variance: \$500, Special Exception: \$500, Special use: \$500, Conditional Use: \$650, Zoning Ordinance Amendment: \$1,000, Site Plan: \$550 base, third and subsequent submission: \$250. Councilor Joyner seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 5-0

Councilor Holloway makes a motion to amend his previous motion to add the effective date of November 1, 2024. The motion now reads to amend Article 22 to

increase the following fees: Rezoning: \$1,500, Variance: \$500, Special Exception: \$500, Special use: \$500, Conditional Use: \$650, Zoning Ordinance Amendment: \$1,000, Site Plan: \$550 base, third and subsequent submission: \$250, to take effect November 1, 2024. Councilor Joyner seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 5-0

R1 – Approval of updated emergency operations plan – Robert Williams

Mr. Williams speaks to the council by briefly going over the update by a presentation provided to the council. He speaks on the changes that were made and what the updates would be in relation to the layout of the COVID requirements and Hopewell alerts. He opens the floor for any questions.

Councilor Denton moves to approve the amendment to the 2024 emergency operations plan as presented; Councilor Harris seconds the motion.

Councilor Joyner asks if we have any communication with citizens who speak specifically about shelters in place. Mr. Williams answered that brochures went out and were posted on the website with shelters in place.

Councilor Holloway asks if a system is in place to alert phones in emergencies. Mr. Williams mentions a geographical area. It is in process, and we still need more training before it is implemented.

ROLL CALL

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|---------------------|-----|
| Councilor Pelham- | Yes |
| Councilor Holloway- | Yes |
| Councilor Joyner- | Yes |
| Councilor Harris- | Yes |

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|-------------------|-----|
| Mayor Partin - | -- |
| Vice Mayor Gore- | -- |
| Councilor Denton- | Yes |

Motion Passes 5-0

R2 – Virginia 250 preservation funds – Charles Bennett

Mr. Bennett begins his presentation by letting the council know there are three (3) separate resolutions he will be asking for action on tonight. He details the pre-applications that he submitted, and they received approval. Tonight, he seeks approval to proceed with three of the four applications he submitted. The first resolution is the Davisville school home, the former Harry E. James Technical School. He gives the council a brief description of the history of this building based on a presentation he provided. He mentions that, with council permission, he is applying for a grant to renovate this building; the grant will fund exterior and interior renovations. He lets the council know there is a 1/3 match coming from the purchase price submitted last year when the property was acquired.

Councilor Holloway makes a motion to accept the resolution to submit Virginia 250 preservation grant applications to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources for the Davisville Plant Schoolhouse in Hopewell; Councilor Joyner seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 5-0

Mr. Bennett begins his next resolution presentation with the Hopewell Marina, and he explains a little about the reason why he is applying for this application. He goes over an outline of the James River and the Appomattox River. He mentions

they are the most historic rivers in our country's founding. This grant application is for improvements to the center docks at the marina to give people with disabilities full access to those historic tour ships. The grant explicitly addresses increasing people's access to historic sites. The grant is to apply for \$255,000, and as a 1/3 match, they would be using \$85,000 as source funds for the improvements already in the budget for this year. This would not be asking for any new funding sources.

Councilor Holloway makes a motion to submit a Virginia 250 preservation grant application to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources for the Hopewell City Marina access project for Hopewell, Virginia; Councilor Joyner seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 5-0

Mr. Bennett begins his last grant application to apply for the preservation of the Shiloh Lodge project. He is looking to construct ADA parking spaces and have wayfinding signage and sight lighting associated with accessibility to the Shiloh Lodge project. The grant will also allow the construction of a medication garden for reflection and contemplation of the history and some things that took place at that site. Mr. Bennet mentions he is applying for \$495,000. It is based on the \$85,000 that they already used to acquire the property, \$50,000 from the Cameron Foundation, and an additional \$124,000 that was approved last year by the council towards the \$750,000 preservation grant. The 1/3 grant requirement of \$166,000, the source funds will be a combination of in-kind and adjacent property acquisition, which is how you get to the \$495,000.

Councilor Holloway makes a motion to submit a Virginia 250 preservation grant application to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources for the city of Hopewell to approve a one-third match grant requirement for the \$166,000 source of match funds will be a combination of in-kind and adjacent property acquisition

for the ADA parking, and Councilor Denton seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 5-0

R3 City of Refuge report and allocation of new opioid dollars – Dr. Manker

Dr. Manker begins her presentation by requesting approval for opioid settlement funds for the City of Refuge. The total amount received so far is \$149,000.00. Tonight, she is asking the city to consider \$70,000 for the council to discuss and consider that surrounding areas put their funds together to have a regional crisis support center. Councilor Pelham mentions she is not comfortable with the \$70,000. Councilor Holloway mentioned it was the same as last year, he thought. Dr. Manker mentions this money is extra because it comes from the settlement funds. The money has to be opioid-related to be used. Councilor Joyner asks if the regional crisis center blends in with their efforts to address food and security. Dr. Manker says no, it is not a topic and does not relate. Councilor Holloway asks for a copy of what it is used for next time before voting on the money. Councilor Harris says other localities feed into some general fund that would allow them to be included regarding money for opioids. Councilor Pelham says she is a member of the refuge board as well as Councilor Harris, but they will sign the conflict form. She thinks maybe holding back some funds to see what other uses can be good. She states she can't make a motion, but she would like to see at least 100,000 go to the refuge and the remaining money stay instead until they find out if there are any other eligible persons.

Councilor Harris makes a motion to approve the \$70,000 donation to the City of Refuge; Councilor Denton seconds the motion.

Councilor Holloway makes a substitute motion to donate \$100,000 to be donated to the City of Refuge, and Councilor Pelhams seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

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| Councilor Pelham- | Yes |
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| Councilor Holloway- | Yes |
| Councilor Joyner- | Yes |
| Councilor Harris- | Yes |
| Mayor Partin - | -- |
| Vice Mayor Gore- | -- |
| Councilor Denton- | No |

Motion Passes 4-1

Councilor Denton makes a motion to extend the meeting until the end of council comments, and Councilor Pelham seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 5-0

Councilor Denton had questions regarding the protocol for motions allowing substitute motions. Councilor Pelham asked the city attorney if they did it correctly, and the City Attorney mentioned that it was made correctly.

Councilor Harris mentions they are not at odds with donating money to the City of Refuge; he would donate all of it if he could. He wanted to be clear: He was not against giving them \$100,000; he only made the motion based on the recommendation.

Reports of City Manager – Transition plan – Dr. Manker

Dr. Manker mentions the transition plan was created to show what the Robert Bobb Group has left behind. She gave historical information from last summer when RBG was hired. They are currently in the process of going through the training for all staff members. RBG was also hired to complete a backlog from 2020 to 2024; the update provided on Friday shows they are incredibly close to

finishing 2020, and once complete, they should be able to knock out the rest of the audits extremely quickly. Dr. Manker thanks the RBG for the efforts and time at the City of Hopewell. She informed the council that not all departments are mentioned in the transition plan. She jumps to page 9 with the items the city requests from the RBG. She highlighted what needed to be done for them to succeed going forward. She goes over the organizational chart to show how the government is made up and how it extends downward. She informed the council that it is a live document and that she will update it with some RBG suggestions. She quickly goes through parts of her transition packet with the council. There are two outstanding issues; she mentions they had to prioritize what was most important to complete. She goes over the training schedules with the council and shows what they have been training on and the upcoming training to take place. The duties outlined for each department are also a part of this packet, including to the council. She opens the floor for any questions from council.

Council and Dr. Manker shared questions and answers regarding the details of the transitional plan.

Council shares final comments with citizens before adjournment.

Meeting ends.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully Submitted,



Brittani Williams, City Clerk



Johnny Partin, Mayor