

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL HELD JUNE 29, 2022

A Special Meeting of the City Council of the City of Hopewell, Virginia, was held on Wednesday, June 29, 2022, at 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Patience Bennett, Mayor, Ward 7
John B. Partin, Vice Mayor, Ward 3
Deborah B. Randolph, Councilor, Ward 1
Arlene Holloway, Councilor, Ward 2
Jasmine E. Gore, Councilor, Ward 4 (arrived later)
Brenda S. Pelham, Councilor, Ward 6

ABSENT: Janice B. Denton, Councilor, Ward 5 (unable to attend)

John M. Altman, City Manager
Mollie P. Bess, City Clerk
Ms. Cynthia Hudson, City Attorney (telephonic participation)

Mayor Bennet opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. and requested a roll call.

ROLL CALL:	Mayor Bennett	-	present
	Vice Mayor Partin	-	present
	Councilor Randolph	-	present
	Councilor Holloway	-	present
	Councilor Pelham	-	present

Quorum established.

Mayor Bennett asked for a motion to adopt the agenda.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Partin and seconded by Councilor Randolph to adopt the agenda.
At the roll call, the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	yes
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 5-0.

WS-1: Review and Discuss Departmental Budget Reductions

Dr. Concetta Manker, IT Director and Interim City Manager, was called to the floor for presentation.

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

Mayor Bennett asked for a motion to ask questions during the presentation. Motion made by Vice Mayor Partin and seconded by Councilor Pelham to allow questions during presentation. At the roll call, the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	yes
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 6-0.

Dr. Manker and staff began the presentation of the budget reductions. Council received the budget packet on Monday, June 20th with the original cuts. At the time, the City Attorney and the Fire Department were not included. The packet was updated on Tuesday of this week, this is the final version that included both departments.

On Tuesday the 21st, Council had instructed staff to go back and review their budgets. As a result, they met with Mr. Jerry Byerly, who was Acting City Manager. They discussed ways to reduce the budget further.

On Friday, the Finance Director submitted a final analysis of the budget which also included outside agencies, but was informed that some of those cuts that each department participated in was also included in the presentation by the City Manager, Mr. March Altman, in the original budget reduction earlier in the budget cycle around March or April of this year.

Today, City staff is here and available to go through each line item for assistance and to answer any questions that Council may have. Dr. Manker recommends following the packet department by department and walk through each line item.

City Attorney

Presented by Dr. Manker; the City Attorney is not available to present her budget cuts. She will do the same for any director who is not present at this meeting. Councilor Randolph asked if she was able to explain the budget for those directors, and Dr. Manker answered affirmatively, as she spoke with each director.

At this point, Councilor Gore arrived.

The City Attorney has a budget of \$424,828. This is not the entire operating budget. The beginning of her budget starts at the cell phone stipend line item and goes all the way down. There is no decrease in the cell phone stipend, no decrease in management consultant services. There is a decrease in legal services by 10% (\$76,500), decrease in service contracts by 10% (\$13,896), further decrease in the remainder of the budget line items to equal \$119,255 (a difference of \$13,644), which is 10% of her budget. It is noted that the City Attorney has a \$424,000 budget, and only \$132,000 is operating funds, which she was able to reduce that down to \$119,000 of operating costs.

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

After a lengthy discussion, Mayor Bennett asked Cynthia Hudson, Acting City Attorney, if a consensus could be gathered at this time, and Ms. Hudson replied affirmatively. Mayor Bennett asked Council how many was in favor for leaving the budget as is.

Vice Mayor Partin was in favor with 10% cuts.

Councilor Pelham was in favor of no cuts.

Councilor Randolph was in favor of no cuts.

Councilor Gore was in favor of leaving budget as is.

Mayor Bennett agreed with Councilor Pelham on the removal of the furniture/fixtures/equipment line items.

Ms. Hudson addressed the Council. She stated that their conversation indicates that there is not a consensus with respect to the budget cuts or reductions proposed in the City Attorney's office as presented; Council may want to elicit a motion so that members can speak or vote specifically. Typically, consensus indicates that no one disagrees, but they have to indicate if they disagree with a particular position or instance. Does everyone agree that the proposed budget presented regarding the City Attorney's office be accepted as presented, are there any objections? If no one objects to that consensus, then Council can quit what is going on here. So, this lends itself more properly into an actual motion – action is being taken tonight with each of these department presentation.

Councilor Pelham asked if they can make a motion to make motions at a meeting, and Councilor Gore said that the rules have to be waived to make motions at a work session. So, Councilor Pelham made a motion to waive the rules to make motions at this meeting in order that Council may complete the budget by tomorrow, June 30th.

Ms. Hudson stated that there may be a part of the departmental presentation when they do have a consensus; she suggested that they may want to solicit it by saying "is there a consensus to do X specifically" as opposed to having each person give their position.

Councilor Pelham asked Ms. Hudson if Council does not get a consensus, do they have to make a motion every time, and Ms. Hudson replied yes.

Mayor Bennett asked Ms. Bess to restate the motion:

The motion is to waive the rules to be able to make motions at this meeting to prepare to approve the budget at tomorrow's meeting.

At the roll call, the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	no
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

Motion passes 6-0.

Councilor Gore made a motion that Council support the City Attorney department cuts, with the exception of Legal Services, Service Contracts, Postage, Mileage, Lodging, Conventions and Conferences, Meals, Books and Subscriptions. Her motion was seconded by Councilor Pelham. At the roll call, the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	no
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	no
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 4-2

City Clerk

The City Clerk's budget was presented by Dr. Manker. Again, she stated that the first twenty line items cannot be touched by directors. The Clerk's total budget is \$207,000, but the operating budget is \$15,000. The budget cuts were already reduced when the City Manager reduced the budget on the 1st round in April. The budget was reduced by 2.3% (\$6,450). Ms. Mollie Bess, City Clerk, was available to answer Council's questions.

Vice Mayor Partin stated that he was fine with the cuts and asked if there was a general consensus amongst Council to move forward with these cuts. Mayor Bennett was okay with the City Clerk budget cuts. Councilor Pelham asked if anyone upheld the consensus. Mayor Bennett asked if anyone opposed to the budget cuts, and no one responded. Councilor Randolph if the cuts were those that were already done for the current budget, and if so, then she was okay with the budget cuts. Consensus was established.

CSA

Presented by Dr. Manker. Ms. Wanda Brown, Manager, Children's Services Act, was not available to present her department budget cuts. Her total budget was \$293,853. Her operating budget was \$25,066.26. Budget was reduced to 12%. Reduced by \$3,226 from the Service Contract line item, which is down from \$10,925 to a total of \$8,000. She has a few items under contract (a copier which is rented, she pays a monthly charge) that equal exactly \$8,000, and she could not reduce any further.

Councilor Gore asked why the CSA has a separate printer contract when at the last budget cycle, everything IT related went under Dr. Manker. Dr. Manker stated that the contract hasn't ended yet, and was not really sure how much longer on the contract.

Councilor Gore stated that she thought the CSA was in the DSS (Department of Social Services) office.

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

Mr. Michael Terry, Finance Director, informed Dr. Manker and Council that the CSA is a non-general fund; this amount is not coming out of the general fund. Mr. Altman also stated that the CSA budget is a separate fund. In the operating budget there is a separate item in the general fund for CSA fund (Fund 15). Because of this, Council went no further and moved forward to the next department.

Development Department

Mr. Chris Ward, Interim Director, presented his department's budget cuts. He stated that this budget was done prior to his taking the interim director position.

The Development Department consists of four divisions: Planning, Code, GIS and Rental Inspections.

Travel and related expenses were cut out for 3 of the four divisions, but left the travel and related expenses for Code for annual certification classes they have to attend. Total: \$10,040. Grass cutting and trash and debris removal, \$50,000; property owners fail to clear trash and debris or cut their grass, the City hires contractors to perform task, and then property owners get billed. The City spends more than that every year; money gets transferred in that line item to cover it for the fiscal year. Historically it's been around \$60,000. Spot blight demolition, when properties get put on the City's spot blight list; \$40,000 budget.

After a lengthy discussion, Councilor Gore made a motion to support the cuts presented with the exception of tall grass and spot blight demolition. Her motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Partin. Mayor Bennett abstained from this vote due to a conflict of interest, filed with the City Clerk. There were no other questions or discussions. At the roll call, the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	abstained
	Councilor Randolph	-	no
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 4-1.

Engineering Division

Presented by Mr. Austin Anderson. Full time salaries and VRS benefits were adjusted, others were not. The largest part of savings for the division was in salaries. Budget cuts were offered for the following line items: postage (rarely used); convention and conferences (completely removed); they never had mileage, travel, public transportation or lodging (nothing to cut for these line items); dues and associated fees, \$300; books and subscription, \$300. Total amount of budget cuts: \$25,676.19.

The division does manage two capital accounts: VDOT Project Match Program and Payment Management accounts (this is for infrastructure); no budget cuts.

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

There are no service accounts, but two important recurring expenses that are not being offered for cuts: Virginia 811 Program (for anyone digging in the City, they contact 811 to have sanitary and storm sewers marked, this is for utility protection); this costs anywhere from \$3,000 to \$4,000 annually and comes out of Consulting Management Services line item. The other recurring expense is for a software called Polaris (allows tickets to be viewed on phone, laptop, computer, or text); costs \$3,000 annually and also comes out of Consulting Management Services line item.

The largest expense that comes out of the Consulting Management Services is the bridge inspection program.

Most of the budget in Engineering is the salaries and benefits (88% of the budget); this is pretty substantial cut out of the operating budget.

Councilor Gore and Mayor Bennett called for a consensus, to which Council agreed, with no objections to the proposal of budget cuts in Engineering.

Fire Department

Presented by Mr. Ben Ruppert, Fire Chief. Mr. Ruppert went through the Fire Department budget. According to his calculations, there is nothing he can do with 93.25% of the budget. This includes salaries, vehicle maintenance, utilities (paying for water hydrants in the City). The remaining 6.75% of the budget includes contracts that are required (software for EMS reporting), maintenance of the software programs (communicate with dispatch), internet services, other things needed that are out of the department's control.

That leaves about 3% of the total budget, which includes training (this is the youngest and most inexperienced in the history of the Fire Department); we need to be investing in training right now.

Mr. Ruppert had nothing that he could comfortably recommend for cutting from the budget; had only a contract for web services, which includes Civic Ready, a communications platform. Code Red was used for 15 years to communicate with citizens. Civic Ready can do a similar function. In the past, the department paid about \$15,000. The current Civic Ready service needs a few upgrades to do the same things as Code Red. That cost is another \$5,000 outside of the contract, leaving \$10,000 remaining in that contract line that could be offered as savings for next year, if the Fire Departments remains with Civic Ready and pay for the additional upgrades.

Mayor Bennett asked Council for a consensus on the Fire Department's budget proposal, but instead a motion was made by Councilor Gore for Council to support the Fire Department's \$10,000 budget cut from Management Consulting Services and then allowing the Fire Department to take their cars home. Her motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Partin. For clarity, Mayor Bennett asked the Clerk to restate the motion. Ms. Bess restated the following: Motion for Council to support the Fire Department's budget with cuts previously surrendered, and to cut the contracts by \$10,000 and all the vehicles be allowed to go home.

After confirming the coverage for the Fire Department, Mayor Bennett requested a roll call. At the roll call, the vote resulted:

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	no
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 5-1.

Human Resources

Presented by Dr. Manker. Budget: \$411,000; operating budget, \$77,000. Steep cuts at 16%, however, the human resource administrator (the #2 person) went through the budget herself to identify where some of these cuts were and notated what she thought she could cut. She expressed that she has the Vision Committee and the Wellness Committee in her department – they offer benefits to employees to help reduce their health insurance and provides incentives. Also works in conjunction with Local Choice (benefits administrator). The line item pays for premium reduction, biometric screening, the 5K Walk, etc. Also used to boost employee morale (luncheons, ice cream socials, Easter egg hunts), and combined costs for employee service awards for those who served for 5, 10, 15, or 20 years.

\$12,650 in cuts were identified. She wanted to leave the ability to obtain the SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management) certification for the new HR Director. There are membership dues that come with that.

Majority of service contracts go to individuals who have retired with the City and associated costs; she is not in the position to cut that line item.

After a lengthy discussion, Mayor Bennett asked if there were anyone opposed to the budget. There were none opposed. Vice Mayor Partin made a motion to adopt cuts as presented, with the exception of the typo given. His motion was seconded by Councilor Gore, asking him if he was fine with a friendly amendment – that instead of saying “typo given,” to say “Books and Subscriptions.” Vice Mayor Partin agreed.

Mayor Bennett asked that the motion be restated for the record. Ms. Bess, City Clerk, restated the motion as follows: the motion is to adopt the HR budget cuts as presented, with the exception of the typo in Books and Subscriptions from \$1,000 to \$500 dollars. At the roll call, the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	no
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 5-1.

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

Finance Department

Presented by Mr. Michael Terry, Finance Director. He had to make a clarification. There was some information that was included for presentation was in error. This information was not submitted but was blended in with the packet along with other information he was sharing with the IT Director (Dr. Manker). There were no cuts relating to this information.

Councilor Gore asked a question regarding the department's operational budget; she asked if there were any budget cuts offered, like from other departments. Mr. Altman stated that the Hopewell Water Renewal was an enterprise. When Councilor Gore asked if that meant no, Mr. Terry answered that she was correct. Mr. Altman added that in yesterday's discussion regarding to capital, \$1.8 million reflects the removal of the building.

Mr. Terry presented a summary worksheet that was submitted to Council. He stated that Finance went through the worksheet to see what could be reduced. Councilor Gore asked if the department only had service contracts to reduce, and Mr. Terry said no. He was here to present a breakdown of the itemization on the service contract. \$54,000 is broken down as follows: \$10,000 is for Clear Gov (budget book software), \$25,000 is for Manotron Inc. (Proval Maintenance Agreement), \$11,000 is for Pictometry International (aerial imagery software), and \$8,700 for Schneider Geospatial (Qpublic Maintenance Agreement). This was all he could provide regarding reductions in the service contracts. Mr. Terry continued with his presentation, stating that Finance voluntarily returned with a reduction of \$10,700 relating to Conventions, Travel & Lodging and Furniture.

After a lengthy comment regarding terminology of service contracts, Mayor Bennett asked for the contract of audit services because of the dollar value of audit services. She then made a motion that Mr. Terry return to his office and provide Council with a list of service contracts, including the budget that reflects the same information as other departments, and she is requesting that this is submitted tonight.

Councilor Randolph's point of information was directed to the City Attorney, asking if this was feasible for Council to leave a meeting to provide information and return. City Attorney Sandra Hudson stated that Council may direct the City Manager to have persons who report to the City Manager provide that information; in other words, the procedure is to request the City Manager to pass on their request to Mr. Terry.

Mayor Bennett stated that in Mr. Terry's contract, Council can directly ask him for information.

Ms. Hudson said that was not a problem with Council as a corrective action, and that they made a motion. If this motion received a second and it passes, then it would be appropriate and correct.

Mayor Bennett retracted her motion and asked Council for support in asking the City Manager to have the Finance Manager bring back what was asked for, a document like this (she displayed a document) before the meeting is over.

Ms. Hudson suggested to the Mayor that the motion would be moved that the City Manager be directed to require the information previously requested by Council from the Finance Department be provided this evening.

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

Mayor Bennett agreed with the wording of the motion. The motion was seconded by Councilor Pelham.

Ms. Bess, City Clerk, asked Ms. Hudson to repeat the motion.

Ms. Hudson stated that the Mayor moves to make Council direct the City Manager to cause the Finance Director to provide information as previously requested by Council.

Mayor Bennett asked for every department in Finance, what is the dollar value of service contracts, asking for information from all four departments.

After a lengthy discussion, the motion was restated.

Councilor Gore asked for clarity regarding prior year and current year of service contracts, audit management services or any other agreements within the Finance Department. She asked Mayor Bennett if she wanted to have dollar amounts included, and that if this can be a friendly amendment so that this is clear to the City Clerk, Mr. Terry and that for all those categories, does she request prior and current year information and Mayor Bennett answered yes.

After a lengthy discussion, Mayor Bennett requested the roll call and the vote resulted:

Motion made by Mayor Bennett and seconded by Councilor Pelham that the motion would be moved that the City Manager be directed to require the information previously requested by Council from the Finance Department be provided this evening, all prior and current year service contracts, and audit management consulting and all other agreements.

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	no
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 5-1.

Mr. Altman asked Mr. Terry if he was clear on what is being asked of him to do. Mr. Terry repeated Council's request: service contracts, audit management consulting. He stated that he wasn't sure of all other contracts.

Mr. Altman asked Council to provide clarity on what is meant by "all."

Mayor Bennett stated that she is saying "service contracts" or "personnel contracts" but Mr. Terry is saying "consulting services." She asked if the City has a contract with VML (Virginia Municipal League).

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

Mr. Altman replied that there is a Management Service Contract with the VML. The Mayor asked what type of service the VML provides. Mr. Altman stated that the VML provides individuals to come here.

Mayor Bennett asked if this is personnel for staffing services, and Mr. Altman replied affirmatively. Mayor Bennett stated the following: Anything in all those departments that we contract out and they give us a person to do those jobs here in this building or another locality or remote place, any type of services – audit and/or consulting person – has to deliver to us as personnel (management consulting, Robert Half) – she asked was that considered personnel or staffing. Mr. Altman stated that this was classified as management services contract. The contract is with the VML, not with an individual.

Ms. Bess, City Clerk, asked Councilor Gore to repeat her friendly amendment statement for the motion. Councilor Gore stated as follows: prior year and current year service contracts, audit management contracts and other agreements.

Councilor Gore's point of information: she wanted to know if the budget sheet was to be included in the motion that was passed; if there needed to be a friendly amendment to ask for that budget page. She asked Ms. Hudson, City Attorney, for the proper term to use to immediately go back and revisit a motion. Ms. Hudson suggested a motion to reconsider.

Councilor Gore (at the advice of Vice Mayor Partin) decided to make a different motion instead.

Mr. Altman recapped the request for Mr. Terry: Contracts. Provide service contract information. In addition, provide management services contracts regardless of whether contract is with VML or individual person. Provide a dollar amount and a breakdown of what that management consulting line looks like in the budget, by who it is, whomever it might be, what was submitted and what was presented.

Councilor Gore stated for clarity that the first part of this request as described by Mr. Altman was correct, and she added that the second part of this request is to mimic the budget layout just like the other departments, to highlight cuts and total the cuts at the bottom of the document.

Mr. Altman stated that the cuts from other departments were around \$10,000 or \$11,000, many of them in the travel lines. He said that he will get that budget and contract information.

Mr. Terry apologized again for not understanding that there was a predetermined format; that what Council has been given was a uniformity where she was working by each department, and that was what was needed to get that information to them. Now it has come to his attention that he needed to have that same format as a part of the uniform presentation. This was not his understanding from the last meeting, but according to the direction from Council and City Manager, he will put his information in that format. He also stated that he will not be able to return this information this evening.

Councilor Gore asked if there were any objections to what was shared. Councilor Randolph objected; Councilor Gore began stating her motion to direct the City Manager to ask Mr. Terry, Finance Director, to bring back a department breakdown as discussed and presented to match the others tonight and to provide all of the contracts and agreements mentioned earlier to Council with dollar figures no later than noon tomorrow. Her motion was seconded by Mayor Bennett.

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

Vice Mayor Partin asked if there was any discussion, and there were none. He requested a roll call, and the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	no
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 5-1.

Information Technology

Dr. Concetta Manker presenting. Before proceeding with her department, Dr. Manker stated that the Finance Department offered \$10,700, and although Council does not have documentation of where he offered that, her goal was to insure that she had a figure calculated for the Finance Director, regarding the ultimate cuts so that he can proceed with drafting a resolution for Council tomorrow. She asked Council if all were in agreement to accept his \$10,700 budget cut. Mr. Altman added that those cuts were already included in the budget.

Dr. Manker moved forward with the presentation of the IT department. She didn't include people in her budget cuts; she was unable to utilize that portion of the budget unless there were vacancies, and at this time, she has no vacancies in her department.

Total budget in IT Department: \$1.5 million, operating budget \$713,000. The line item equipment repairs was the former Technology line item for all departments. Every department had a Technology line item, and Council agreed to consolidate those monies into that line item. That line item represents all of the departments and allows her to be able to provide services to those departments. She has a lot of line items that are very high, and she is open to any questions concerning those line items. As an infrastructure department providing services to all departments by way of technology, she was only able to reduce her budget by \$21,000.

She has reduced travel to MUNIS conferences. Now that there is an ERP administrator, she reduced the number of conference attendees to one person. The ERP system is the largest and most expensive system running in IT, and it is very important to keep up with updates and changes.

Vehicle maintenance has been totally reduced as well, as they no longer have a vehicle; it has been auctioned off, so vehicle and gas are no longer needed. Postage has been totally reduced; but they do have postage fees for damaged equipment that must be returned. She may be able to capture this from another line item. Books and Subscriptions has been reduced to \$600.

Voice Over IP is a healthy amount at \$65,000; because of the reduction of analog phone lines and long distance services, IT has saved over \$250,000. VOIP is the new system that requires a maintenance agreement, and while she is not able to utilize the entire budget there; there are some savings. In the past, she has used those savings to go into Service Contracts where she would consistently go over budget.

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

She would put those dollars back in to the Service Contracts. She then presented her list of service contracts and new requests for the year. Tyler MUNIS is \$95,000; every year it increases by 5%, so she included that as a new request.

The Court Case Management System (used by the Commonwealth Attorney) module; again there is the yearly 5% increase that also goes to Tyler MUNIS. Tyler Parks and Recreation MUNIS Module - \$5,000/year is a new request. This was purchased to replace their current recreational system to bring it in-house to communicate with MUNIS. A \$5,000 yearly cost has been incurred; however this is actually a cost savings, as the system they are currently using is more expensive. ExecuTime - \$11,000 – (payroll and time keeping system to replace the use of Excel to keep up with people's times), was a purchase made with CARES money, and now it can be done electronically, and now on a yearly cycle. MUNIS Tyler for OpenFinance - \$12,000 – Council approved this last year; this is maintenance cost.

Seamless Gov – Council approved in May of 2021 to convert documents to digital format. Cost: \$21,000 yearly. The yearly cost ended this month; will renew again on July 1.

Dr. Manker was asked by Council to speak only on the cuts; Dr. Manker stated that she did do so as requested and wanted to list her service contracts as well, as also requested.

Councilor Gore asked if there were any objections to the cuts, and one objection came from Councilor Randolph. Councilor Gore made a motion that Council approve the IT Department's budget cuts as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Partin. At the roll call, the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	no
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 5-1.

Parks and Recreation Department

Mr. Tom Gates presenting. Their operating budget is around \$400,000. Their 10% deduction is from Special Events, \$47,000 for the fireworks, parades, holiday events. Councilor Gore made a motion to approve the Parks and Recreation's budget as presented. Her motion was seconded by Mayor Bennett and Vice Mayor Partin. At the roll call, the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	no
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 5-1.

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

Police Department

Police Chief A. J. Starkes presenting. The Police Department's budget is \$8.4 million; their operating budget is \$1.239 million. Salaries and benefits make up the majority of the budget, but they are offering budget cuts: Request for fifteen rifles rescinded for a savings of \$34,000. Case Cracker software, a savings of \$37,435.

Councilor Pelham asked if the Case Cracker software is helpful in solving a case, and was this item critical to have. Chief Starkes stated that the Case Cracker software is an updated version of the current software that has been in use for many years, and are able to work with what they currently have. Chief Starkes is also asking for 15 police cars and if appropriate would like to discuss the reason for this request. Mr. Altman stated that the cars were not included in the capital budget.

Councilor Gore asked if there was a rotation in place for the rifles, and Chief Starker stated that there was no rotation in place since 2010, when the rifles were purchased. The rifles are critical to the SWAT team; thousands of rounds have been discharged from them and over a period of time, they do wear out. Moving forward, his plan is to develop a rotation system to present to the City Manager for discussion to avoid having to make large purchases at one time. Mr. Altman stated that for the rifle piece, if this is something that Council is willing to do, this can be used with ARPA funding.

Mayor Bennett asked the Chief if there was a buyback program for the rifles. The Chief stated that he was not prepared to answer, but will find out to see how much of a savings that would be.

Councilor Randolph thanked the Chief for his presentation; she was going to vote no on his budget cuts; it is important for the Police Department to not have any budget cuts. She spoke in favor of the request of the fifteen cars.

Councilor Pelham made a motion to extend the meeting time until all departmental requests have been addressed and voted on. Her motion was seconded by Councilor Gore. Mayor Bennett requested a roll call, and the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	no
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 5-1.

Vice Mayor Partin spoke in favor of keeping the Police Department budget exactly as it is with no budget cuts, and if Council is okay with this, to add the part-time detective position that was previously requested by email.

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

Councilor Gore asked the Vice Mayor if this matter could be addressed tomorrow and that Council could just focus on the cuts tonight. Vice Mayor ask if Council could allow Chief to explain the need for a part-time detective, and Council collectively agreed.

After a lengthy discussion regarding the need for a retired, experienced part-time detective to assist in solving cold cases and help with unsolved cases with leads and information, Vice Mayor Partin asked Chief Starkes to provide Council, City Manager and Dr. Manker with all information and price figures; the Chief agreed to do so. After another lengthy discussion with Councilor Pelham regarding his reasons for requesting 15 cars and conditions of his current fleet, he asked Council and City Manager, moving forward, to consider a rotation in which 3-4 vehicles could be purchased per year.

After a lengthy discussion with Councilor Gore regarding the importance of Council being made aware of departmental issues and other information, she reiterated to the Chief the request of his rotation list. She also asked if the cost of the equipment for each car was included in his request. Chief Starkes replied that the cost covers the cars, and there is an additional line item of \$76,245 that covers the police radios. The dollar amount presented is what is needed to outfit those vehicles. There are no other hidden costs.

Councilor Gore that Council approve the Police Department's budget as presented without cuts. Vice Mayor Partin seconded her motion with a friendly amendment to include that police officers take the vehicles home.

Mr. Altman stated that the Case Cracker software and the rifles were not included in the manager's proposed budget because of the shortfall, so those items need to be added to the budget.

Councilor Gore changed her motion to say, "Approve the Police Department's budget as submitted by the City Manager and to allow the Police Department to take cars home."

Mayor Bennett asked the Clerk to restate the motion for the record.

Ms. Bess restated the motion: To approve the Police Department's budget as submitted by the City Manager, and to allow police officers to take their vehicles home.

Mayor Bennett asked Mr. Altman if Council was going to review the ARPA for the police vehicles and for the rifles. Mr. Altman replied that the request for the vehicles were submitted by Chief Kamron Afzal, and he presented that to City Council with the original presentation. The City was to receive two allotments of money. Council could be able to consider all of them at one time, since the City has taken action on only a half a million dollars of ARPA money. The request for all 15 vehicles were submitted by Chief Afzal, and he is sure those are the same 15 vehicles requested by Chief Starkes. Mr. Altman stated that he doesn't believe that the 15 rifles are there in the ARPA funds, but they can be added.

Mayor Bennett thanked the City Manager for the clarity, and requested a roll call. At the roll call, the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

Mayor Bennett	-	yes
Councilor Randolph	-	no
Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 5-1.

Public Works

Presented by Mr. Ed Watson, Director. He was directed to present 10% budget cuts even though his department is classified as infrastructure. Department has a lot of service contracts; expressed inflation is his biggest concern due to increase in costs of gas and parts. These cuts will hit his department pretty hard, and he asked that Council not to cut their budget, but if they do, he recommended the following:

Cleaning – reduced in Court, City Hall, other City buildings, from 4 day to 1 day a week
Stormwater improvements in the Public Works yard – this can be paid out of refuge account (enterprise fund) to address rain retention ponds onsite.
Concrete – if he gets into a bind and has to move money, he can do that.

Mayor Bennett asked if the Department can take vehicles home. Mr. Watson stated that there are only two or three supervisors on call.

After a lengthy discussion, and for clarification, Councilor Gore and Mr. Watson addressed following list of items in his budget that could be cut:

Tuition assistance – she asked if he's cutting this \$1,000 amount out of the budget, and Mr. Watson said that if need be, then yes; only used once in the past 2-3 years.

Reduce office supplies, books and subscriptions, \$3,600

Engineering services – \$5,000; used when someone is needed to design something like curb cuts. Money is not used very often; can be returned to general fund.

Reduced training and fees.

Total amount of cuts: \$9,600, which Councilor Gore deemed as fair for the department, and Mr. Watson agreed. In terms of contracts, Councilor Gore asked about the status with the trash collection regarding a letter Council received stating that service could potentially be cut off at the end of July.

After Mr. Altman's lengthy discussion regarding Meridian's request for a rate increase (\$3.22) and CVWMA's new contract with Waste Management, Councilor Gore made a motion to approve Public Works' proposed budget with the cuts of education tuition assistance, office supplies, books, engineering services, convention and conferences and the reduced training as presented, and to allow on-call staff to take vehicles home. Her motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Partin.

Mayor Bennett asked the Clerk to restate the motion: The motion is to pass the Public Works budget with the cuts of tuition assistance, office supplies, books and subscriptions, engineering services, conference

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

and conventions by \$1,000 and to allow on-call staff to take their vehicles home. Her motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Partin. A roll call was requested, and the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	no
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 5-1.

Social Services

Mr. Altman stated that the funding of Social Services mainly comes from the State; the City has a very small percentage match. If the City cuts from their budget, then the City is 100 % responsible for providing the service, but DSS will not get State support. Motion made by Councilor Gore that Council approves Social Services' budget as the City Manager presented it. Her motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Partin. Roll call was requested, and the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	yes
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 6-0.

Circuit Court

Letter from Ms. Tammy Ward, Circuit Court Clerk, presented by Dr. Manker. Ms. Ward's letter stated that the Technology Fund is returned back to the City on a yearly basis. This item is listed at \$20,000, and was already accepted in the budget by the City Manager in May 2022. There are no changes in her budget, and she is requesting no additional reductions. A motion made by Councilor Gore and seconded by Councilor Pelham to approve the Circuit Court Clerk's budget as presented by City Manager. Roll call was requested, and the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	yes
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 6-0.

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

Commissioner of the Revenue

Dr. Manker presenting; Ms. Debbie Reason was not available this evening. Ms. Reason offered \$9,372 from her budget. Master Chief Deputy Amanda Kidd was asked to step forward and continue the presentation. Ms. Kidd stated that, with the exception of four line items, the budget cuts were across the board, which totaled \$9,372. Motion made by Councilor Gore and seconded by Vice Mayor Partin that Council approve the Commissioner of Revenue budget as presented. Roll call was requested, and the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	no
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 5-1.

Commonwealth Attorney

Dr. Manker presenting. Mr. Rick Newman submitted documentation; not requesting any cuts and indicated that cutting his budget will require laying off an attorney. Motion made by Vice Mayor Partin and seconded by Councilor Pelham to keep the Commonwealth Attorney's budget as presented by the City Manager. Roll call was requested, and the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	yes
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 6-0.

Sheriff's Office

Dr. Manker presenting. The Sheriff's office has two locations, the main office and the division (outlined and named as Courts); two service contracts are submitted as documentation. The Sheriff requests that \$6,950 be reduced from his budget. Typo noted in his line item: instead of office supply line item (\$5,500), he is requesting that this remains the same, but the agricultural supply line (\$5,000) is what he is offering to be cut. Motion made by Councilor Gore and seconded by Vice Mayor Partin to approve the Sheriff's Office budget with the cuts presented by the Sheriff. Roll call was requested, and the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
------------	-------------------	---	-----

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

Councilor Gore	-	yes
Councilor Pelham	-	yes
Mayor Bennett	-	yes
Councilor Randolph	-	no
Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 5-1.

Treasurer's Office

Ms. Shannon Foskey presenting. Her budget is \$576,919.45. Asking to cut the Other Professional Services (Robert Half) and the service contract (BMS, printing vendor). Budget in the Other Professional Services line item was \$120,000; used \$116,000 for the year 2021. She is hoping to cut this budget to get the full time position that the department needs for accounting; they won't need Other Professional Services with Robert Half if they have a full time accountant. Motion made by Councilor Gore and seconded by Vice Mayor Partin to approve the Treasurers Department with the budget cut from Other Professional Services for \$23,000. At the roll call, the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	no
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 5-1.

Voter Registration Office

Presented by Dr. Manker. They are not proposing any budget cuts because he has no areas to cut. His convention, meals, dues, and memberships are all related and required by state code for him to have certain training.

Councilor Pelham's question was in reference to the Furniture line item; she asked if he needed \$51,000. Mr. Altman stated that they have two new voting machines and replacement tables for those machines; things that wear out over time. These are items that are not in the building, but things that are transported to the polling places.

Motion made by Councilor Gore and seconded by Vice Mayor Partin to approve the Voter Registrar's office as presented by City Manager. At the roll call, the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	yes
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 6-0.

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

Finance Budget Cut Analysis

Presented by Dr. Manker. This is where there are other areas outside of the operating budget that also had cuts that need to be addressed and approved by Council.

All General Funds – as explained to Dr. Manker by Mr. Terry, if Council wants to remove all mileage from all departments, \$14,190 will be what Council saves. If Travel, Lodging, Conferences and Meals across the board, this would be the amount that Council will save. This is really just a picture of what Council will save if the budget was cut across every department.

Councilor Gore stated that all general fund down to the City Clerk has already been discussed.

Mr. Altman asked Councilor Pelham if she wanted to eliminate the Assistant City Manager, the cost associated with the salary and fringe benefits, and she said yes.

There were lengthy discussions regarding the non-departmental contingency funds, Economic Development line items, as well as outside agencies Virginia State University, Richard Bland College, Legal Aid, City of Refuge and Downtown Partnership. After their discussion, Councilor Gore made a motion to leave the non-departmental monies and leave everything in except VSU and Richard Bland College. Her motion died for lack of a second.

Vice Mayor Partin made a motion to reduce the contingency fund from \$350,000 to \$250,000, and for outside agencies, add in Lamb Arts Center for \$10,000. His motion died for lack of a second.

Councilor Gore was fine with reducing the contingency to \$250,000; as for the outside agencies, the Downtown Partnership was always funded when it became a Main Street organization. They already have reduced funding; this is operations for them.

Mr. Altman stated for clarity that the Downtown Partnership currently has \$70,000 this year. There was a reduction in previous year's budget, but was restored last year.

Councilor Gore made a motion that Council continue to cut the Assistant City Manager position, reduce the contingency fund to \$250,000, request the City Manager to bring back a three-year actual cost for expenditures per assessment, request the City Manager to bring back a revised Economic Development budget consolidated into one that only includes obligated payments. Her motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Partin.

After a brief discussion, Mayor Bennett asked for the motion to be restated. Councilor Gore restated her motion as follows: to reduce the contingency fund to \$250,000, direct the City Manager to provide Council a three-year expenditure report of what was spent each year and then for the City Manager to bring back a consolidated Economic Development budget that only includes Council's obligated payments.

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

City Attorney Cynthia Hudson suggested to Council to divide rather than combine that motion to make is easier to repeat and articulate and make the record easier to review and make it clearer. After a brief discussion regarding this motion, Councilor Gore restated her motion again: to reduce the contingency fund to \$250,000 and for the City Manager to bring back a three-year expenditure report for cost per each year.

Councilor Randolph asked if this report was for the contingency fund and Councilor Gore answered affirmatively. A time line was discussed and a friendly amendment was issued by Mayor Bennett to accept the timeframe of 12 noon.

Councilor Pelham made a motion to reduce the contingency fund to \$100,000 and to keep the verbiage previously stated in the previous motion stated by Councilor Gore.

Councilor Gore reminded all that there is a motion on the floor that has been seconded already.

Mayor Bennett requested a roll call for Councilor Gore's motion to continue to cut the Assistant City Manager position, reduce the contingency fund to \$250,000, request the City Manager to bring back a three-year actual cost for expenditures per assessment, request the City Manager to bring back a revised Economic Development budget consolidated into one that only includes obligated payments, which was seconded by Vice Mayor Partin. At the roll call the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	no
	Mayor Bennett	-	no
	Councilor Randolph	-	no
	Councilor Holloway	-	no

Motion failed 4-2.

Councilor Gore made another motion for City Manager Dr. Manker and the Finance Director to provide a consolidated Economic Development budget that only includes obligated payments.

After a brief discussion regarding the Economic Development fund and the Economic Development Division underneath the City Manager, Mayor Bennett requested a restatement of the motion. Councilor Gore restated the motion as follows: motion is for the City Manager to absolve the Economic Development fund, and to bring back the Economic Development Department budget that only includes Council's obligated payments. Her motion was seconded by Councilor Pelham. At the roll call, the vote resulted:

ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	no
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	no
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

**Special Meeting
June 29, 2022**

Motion passes 4-2.

Councilor Pelham made a motion that Council add the City of Refuge back without the reduction of \$50,000 out of the \$100,000 they requested, as well as Downtown Partnership, and she stated that this motion can be done individually. After a brief discussion, Councilor Pelham made a motion that those agencies listed except Virginia State University and Richard Bland College be eliminated from the non-departmental agencies. Councilor Gore reminded her that the agencies are all funded so there was no need to make a motion. Councilor Pelham rescinded her motion. Councilor Pelham did make a motion to add Lamb Arts for \$10,000. Her motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Partin.

Councilor Gore made a friendly amendment; she stated that she was not in support with the addition of Lamb Arts and Mr. Altman added that this was an opportunity to address this with the discussion of the ARPA funds. After a brief discussion regarding Lamb Arts, Councilor Pelham rescinded her motion. Councilor Gore stated for clarification that there is no change to non-departmental outside agencies.

Finance Department

Mr. Michael Terry, Finance Director presenting. The Finance Department is composed of four units: Accounting, Budget, Procurement and Real Estate Assessor. The IT Director worked with the departments to gather the budget reductions.

Accounting (Lodging, Conventions) - \$3,250
Budget (Travel, Lodging, Conventions and Conferences, Furniture, Fixtures, Equipment) - \$6,650
Procurement (Conventions and Conferences) - \$800
Summary of reductions - \$10,700

For service contracts:

Budget - \$10,000
Service contracts - \$44,700
Total - \$54,700

After a lengthy discussion, Councilor Gore made a motion that Council approve the Finance Department's cuts presented that may include tuition assistance if not currently being used. Her motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Partin. At the roll call, the vote resulted:

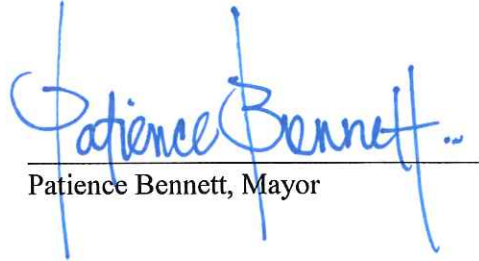
ROLL CALL:	Vice Mayor Partin	-	yes
	Councilor Gore	-	yes
	Councilor Pelham	-	yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	no
	Councilor Holloway	-	yes

Motion passes 6-1.

Special Meeting
June 29, 2022

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor called for a motion to adjourn; made by Councilor Gore. Instead, Mayor Bennett called for all in favor to adjourn; Council collectively agreed to end the meeting.



Patience Bennett, Mayor

/s/ Mollie P. Bess
Mollie P. Bess, City Clerk