

MINUTES OF THE JUNE 25, 2024 CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

A REGULAR meeting of the Hopewell City Council was held on Tuesday June 25, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

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

CLOSED MEETING:

Councilor Joyner makes a motion to go into closed meeting pursuant to Va. Code Section § 2.2-371 1 (A)(I) to discuss and consider personnel matters, including board and commission appointments; the assignment and performance of specific appointee and employees of City Council, and to the extent such discussion will be aided thereby, Councilor Pelham seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL	Councilor Denton-	Yes
	Councilor Pelham-	Yes
	Councilor Holloway-	(Absent)
	Councilor Joyner-	Yes
	Councilor Harris-	(Absent)
	Mayor Partin-	Yes
	Vice Mayor Gore-	(Abstain)

Motion Passes 4-0

Reconvene Open Meeting

Councilor Denton makes a motion to reconvene open meeting. Councilor Pelham seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Denton-	Yes
Councilor Pelham-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	(Absent)
Councilor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	(Absent)
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Vice Mayor Gore-	(Abstain)

Motion Passes 4-0

CERTIFICATION:

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

ROLL CALL

Councilor Denton-	Yes
Councilor Pelham-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	(Absent)
Councilor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	(Absent)
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Vice Mayor Gore-	(Abstain)

Motion Passes 4-0

WORK SESSION

WS-1-Prince George County Waste Water Allocation Request- Allen

Harrison, Water Renewal Director. Dr. Manker introduces the new Director for Water Renewal. Mr. Harrison brings everyone up to speed on a request from Prince George County. He discusses that Prince George County made a request to the city to get an additional 5 million gallons so they will be at capacity. He notes the request was taken to the commission last week and they were in favor of looking at it and referred it to their technical advisory committee and they will probably have an answer towards the end of the summer. They will know a little more once they meet with them. He goes into some details and steps of what the next steps are for the request from Prince George County. He adds there is support of it from the Commission and staff will be working with them to look at it. Mr. Allen would like to bring it back around late summer early fall, once the details are worked out. Dr. Manker takes a moment after Mr. Harrison's Work Session briefing to introduce Mr. Allen Harrison to everyone watching and the City Council.

REGULAR MEETING

Mayor Partin calls the Regular Meeting to order

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

Prayer by Pastor Harville, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilor Denton.

Councilor Denton makes a motion to adopt the Regular meeting agenda.
Councilor Pelham seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Denton-	Yes
Councilor Pelham-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	(Absent)
Councilor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	(Absent)
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Vice Mayor Gore-	(Abstain)

Motion Passes 4-0

Councilor Denton makes a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda. Councilor Pelham seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Denton-	Yes
Councilor Pelham-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	(Absent)
Councilor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	(Absent)
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Vice Mayor Gore-	(Abstain)

Motion Passes 4-0

COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS

1. **Sharah Fuller-** Mrs. Fuller introduces herself to the council and that she is the neighborhood watch Captain for Ward 5. She talks about their next neighborhood watch meeting being held on July 1st at 6:00 at Wesley United Methodist. She comments all are welcome to attend, whether or not you live in Ward 5. The Ward 3 cookout has been postponed until August. Next cook out will be out Powers Baptist church on the 10th from 5pm to 7pm. Everyone is welcome to come. The cooling shelter is now open for different needs, Monday through Friday from 10 AM to 7 PM and Saturday and Sunday from 10 AM to 7PM at the formal warming shelter.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Ph1 - Conditional Use Permit to construct at 512 Hopewell St – Chris Ward, Director of Development – Mr. Ward begins his presentation explaining this is to construct a 7-foot fence in a front yard in relation to parcel #080-1070 also identified at 512 Hopewell St. He gives a description of the property and where it is located based on a map he provided to council. He states the zoning ordinance permits fences up to 4ft tall, fences taller than that can only go up to 7ft. He explains the type of fence it would be and where it would be placed in the yard dimensions wise. He goes over what each picture he provided is showing to council, giving explanation to each photo. The planning commission agreed and made no changes and gave their approval at the May 2nd meeting.

Councilor Pelham asks has any other 7ft fences been approved, Mr. Ward stated none that he knows of. She mentions she cannot support this request tonight.

Councilor Joyner mentions the house is beautiful and the triangle area is where they are asking for the fence for privacy purposes. She is glad someone is investing in this and she will support it.

Mayor Partin mentions he can justify it and it backs up to city park which is a top 3 visited location so he understands the need for privacy.

Councilor Pelham makes a motion to allow Vice Mayor Gore to participate remotely, Councilor Joyner seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Denton-	Yes
Councilor Pelham-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	(Absent)
Councilor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	(Absent)
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Vice Mayor Gore-	(Abstain)

Motion Passes 4-0

Vice Mayor Gore asks is the fence going to be in the front-yard with cemetery in the back yard? Mr. Ward mentions that is correct and gives detail answer to her question.

Mayor Partin opens the public hearing.

1. Sh’Va BenYacov comes up to the podium and states “I suffer PTSD and I may have misunderstood what I was signing up for but if anyone has any questions about my property I am here”. He then went back to have a seat.

Councilor Joyner make a motion to approve the CUP as presented, Councilor Denton. Councilor Pelham states she would like to change her mind and support the motion seeing that the applicant is a veteran and needs his privacy.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 5-0

PH2 – School Board Vacancies Update – Dr. Manker mentions this public hearing is to advertise there will be openings to this board this time next year, and to reach out to the city clerk to inquire about the vacancies and to fill out TBR so they can be interviewed by council to potentially be a part of the school board.

REGULAR BUSINESS

R1 - Modification to Development Standards for 5105 Oaklawn Blvd – **Chris Ward, Director of Development** – Mr. Ward opens up giving a brief description of where this address is located and the mentions the proposed second sign will conform to the city's free standing sign specification. He mentions the first sign is going to reface an existing pole sign that is already there. For modifications they look at several considerations and it should not be granted if one of them is met. He then goes over each of those considerations. He mentions planning commission recommends approval, on June 13 they had a 5 to 0 approval. He opens the floor for questions.

Councilor Pelham asked does she think this will cause traffic, Mr. Ward states in his experience cook out can generate traffic issues, the good news this location has a second entrance. He mentions they have informed the police department and they are aware of possible traffic issues.

R2 – Park and Recreation Professional Day – Tabitha Martinez – Ms. Martinez gives a detailed description of what her and her team has accomplished and what they continue to do on a daily basis. She thanks Council for their continued support and she asks for council to proclaim July 19th as Park and Recreation Professional Day.

Councilor Joyner makes a motion to approve July 19th as Parks and Recreation Professional Day, Councilor Pelham seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 5-0

R3 – Sturgeon Sculpture – Tabitha Martinez – Ms. Martinez mentions this sculpture was approved in 2023 for installment, and she mentions when it was installed it was requested to have it there for a year, it is now requested to have it there indefinitely by the grantor of the sturgeon arts. She is here tonight requesting consideration regarding that request from Heather Lyne at the Hopewell Downtown Partnership.

Councilor Joyner mentions it is technically culture works that is requesting that it stays. She wanted to ensure they received credit for the request.

Councilor Joyner makes a motion to allow the sturgeon sculpture to remain indefinitely down at city part, Councilor Pelham seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 5-0

R4- Resolution of Support for Smart Scale – Michael Campbell – Mr. Campbell begins his presentation by letting council know he is requesting a

resolution of support for SmartScale. He speaks about the 4 projects the city has submitted, which is the Courthouse Rd Phase 2, Winston Churchill Corrido Phase 1, Winston Churchill Phase 2, and the East Randolph Rd safety improvement project. These are for SmartScale which is 100 % reimbursement with no financial burden from the city. The second part of his resolution is the Tri Cities Metropolitan planning organization was kind enough to at the city staff request to put in an application for the Winston Churchill Corridor Improvement the entire project, and the other application they are asking for support on is the I85, I95 interchange improvements. The recommendation is for City Council to please approve the resolution of support for all 6 projects. The cycle will close on August 1, so if it is not done today they will not be able to get done at all and it will disqualify the applications.

Councilor Pelham makes a motion to approve the entire SmartScale application and the Tri-City MPO recommendations per the resolution and this be formally added to the CIP plan, Councilor Denton seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 5-0

R5 – Cigarette Tax Ordinance – Dr. Manker – Dr. Manker mentions council approved the tax resolution on April 16th and approved the budget resolution at the second public hearing on May 28th. Once they created the tax ordinance they now have to adopt the tax ordinance. She mentions this is a formality. She mentions the ordinance is to take effect on January 1, 2025. Staff recommends that council approve the cigarette tax ordinance if it coincides with the tax rate that was approved on April 16 and the FY 2025 budget resolution.

Councilor Pelham asks if this is not starting in January did they take into consideration when they did the budget revenues for July to December. Dr. Manker mentions yes it takes about 6 to 8 months so the ordinance needs to be in place before the commissioner of revenue can proceed down that road to tax the store. Councilor Pelham asks was it built into the budget. Dr. Manker mentions revenue will not be received until starting in January. Councilor Pelham asks to give her the difference between one year projected vs 6 months' revenue and is it going to impact the budget. Mr. Russ comes online to answer the question in further detail.

Councilor Denton makes a motion to approve the cigarette tax ordinance that coincides with the tax rate that was approved on April 16 and the FY 2025 budget resolution, Councilor Pelham seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

Councilor Denton-	Yes
Councilor Pelham-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	(Absent)
Councilor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	(Absent)
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Vice Mayor Gore-	(No)

Motion Passes 4-1

Vice Mayor Gore asks when would the proceeds come in, Russ responded they assumed it would start in January 1, 2025.

R6 – Children Service Act Budget Adjustment – Russel Branson, Interim Finance Director – Mr. Russ begins his presentation giving a description of what CSA is for and how it works. It mentions it has often gone over the budget amount and the revenue from CSA this year was 3.7 million and they have paid that out and are now into 2 months of payments left for May and June. The may amounts are 300,00 and expect the same for June. They are asking for an additional appropriation of \$600,00.00 to make those payments. The budget ordinances have the approved appropriate for each department and 3.7 was approved appropriate, in order to spend more they will need council

approval to raise it higher. He mentions the cost to the city would only be 133,00.00.

Councilor Pelham asked was it 74 or 76 percent, the answer given was 74 percent. For every dollar Hopewell spends, they get reimbursed 74 percent of it. Mrs. Brenda responds to Councilor Pelham in further detail of how the process works. Councilor Pelham asked what do they do with all the money they get back? Dr. Manker states it goes back to the general fund. She asks for the exact amount that will go into general fund once the year is closed out? Mr. Russ stated he will have that number for her.

Vice Mayor Gore asked Mr. Russ for the overage for this year does next year's budget account for the same amount in case it happens again. Russ mentions they will likely have to request it again if it happens again next year. Vice Mayor Gore states this is the first time she is hearing about this, and what is different from this year and prior years. She asked on average based on prior years has the overaged occurred every year and they just did not know about it. Russ said last year it was over about the same, prior years it's harder to tell. He mentions his staff says it has been consistently overage. Vice Mayor Asked how has the overages been corrected in the budget. Russ mentions he was told they went after it was spent to get the adjustment and he is not sure if that is accurate. She mentions the biggest concern is it being three departments with overages, are there checks in the system to prevent overspending? Mr. Russ answers saying there are limits and systems but they can be overwritten. The system has alerts to alert when there are not enough funds, which requires them to come to council. She then asks is there a way to stop it in MUNIS to prevent the payments besides the alerts. Once Russ is gone and people go back to old habits we will be back in this position. Russ mentions it is in there and would need to be overwritten, but he believes the person coming in will hold these lines.

Councilor Denton makes a motion to approve an increase in budget appropriation for FY 24 for the children's service act fund 015 from 3,700,00.00 to 4,300,00.00, councilor Joyner seconds the motion.

Councilor Pelham asked city attorney to put in the motion for the motion to show the reimbursement the city will receive. 74 percent of the 600,00 will be reimbursed by the state of VA. Councilor Denton and Councilor Joyner accepts the friendly amendment.

ROLL CALL


Councilor Denton-	Yes
Councilor Pelham-	Yes
Councilor Holloway-	(Absent)
Councilor Joyner-	Yes
Councilor Harris-	(Absent)
Mayor Partin-	Yes
Vice Mayor Gore-	No

Motion Passes 4-1

Councilor Joyner makes a motion to Adjourn.

ADJOURN

Respectfully Submitted,


Brittani Williams, City Clerk


John Partin, Mayor