

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL HELD OCTOBER 7, 2021

A Special Meeting of the City of Hopewell, Virginia was held Thursday, October 7, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Bennett called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Patience Bennett, Mayor, Ward 7
John B. Partin, Jr., Vice Mayor, Ward 3
Deborah A. Randolph, Councilor Ward 1
Arlene Holloway, Councilor, Ward 2
Jasmine E. Gore, Councilor, Ward 4
Janice Denton, Councilor, Ward 5
Brenda S. Pelham, Councilor, Ward 6

STAFF:

John March Altman, Jr., City Manager
Mollie P. Bess, City Clerk

Mayor Bennett turned the meeting over to Councilor Gore, who called the Special Meeting. Councilor Gore stated we are here to talk about the FY18 audit. When City Council last met we were told that we had to make a decision about whether or not to close the audit or to allow staff to fix the issues that were reported in the audit. Would like to know what is going on with the audit, what are some of the issues that were found and to hear about why it took so long and to hear about the recommendations on the issues that were found in order for Council to make a determination on how to proceed.

Mr. David Foley, a partner with Robinson, Farmer, Cox and Associates was called to present the audit findings on the 2018 audit. Mr. Foley gave a brief history on his background and that of the firm. He went out to explain new processes and to give some required communications. Two main pieces to the audit of the financial statements and in addition to that there is also a review of the internal controls over financial reporting. No significant difficulties with management were encountered while performing the audit, there were no uncorrected misstatements, any adjustments that were proposed were made on the City's books. There were no disagreements with management in terms of accounting treatments or procedures performed, if we had any they would have been required to be disclosed, the consultation with other independent accountants, management informed them and to their knowledge there were no other consultations with other accountants regarding audit.

Draft reports were issued for City Council to review. First one is the independent auditor's report, where an opinion is issued on the financial statements. In the draft report a disclaimer is issued, which information is included in the report. Lack of reconciliation has been an issue prior to RFC&A becoming the auditors. They did not have sufficient evidence to issue an opinion on the financial statements.

Motion made by Councilor Gore and seconded by Councilor Pelham to task City Manager Altman to draft an RFP and provide legal review to conduct a risk bond assessment and compliance audit of treasurer dept., payroll, & finance dept. as well as the four main enterprise accounts; stormwater, sewer, solid waste and the Beacon and bring back to City Council for final approval at a Special Meeting on November 4, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call:	Councilor Pelham	-	Yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	Yes

Councilor Randolph	-	Yes
Councilor Holloway	-	Yes
Vice Mayor Partin	-	Yes
Councilor Gore	-	Yes
Councilor Denton	-	Yes

Motion Passes: Ayes – 7
 No – 0

Motion made by Councilor Denton and seconded by Vice Mayor Partin to accept the 2018 audit and audit findings and for Mr. Altman and Mr. Terry to come back to City Council at the October 26, 2021 City Council Regular Meeting with the draft and finance plan with the answers to the questions that Council has tonight.

Roll Call:	Councilor Pelham	-	No
	Mayor Bennett	-	Yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	Yes
	Councilor Holloway	-	Yes
	Vice Mayor Partin	-	Yes
	Councilor Gore	-	Yes
	Councilor Denton	-	Yes

Motion Passes: Ayes – 6
 No – 1

Motion made by Councilor Gore and seconded by Councilor Denton to move into Closed Session to discuss recruitment of City Attorney.

Roll Call:	Councilor Pelham	-	Yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	Yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	Yes
	Councilor Holloway	-	Yes
	Vice Mayor Partin	-	Yes
	Councilor Gore	-	Yes
	Councilor Denton	-	Yes

Motion Passes – Ayes – 7
 No – 0

Motion made by Councilor Denton and seconded by Councilor Randolph to come out Closed Session.

Roll Call:	Councilor Pelham	-	Yes
	Mayor Bennett	-	Yes
	Councilor Randolph	-	Yes
	Councilor Holloway	-	Yes
	Vice Mayor Partin	-	Yes

Councilor Gore - Yes
Councilor Denton - Yes

Motion Passes – Ayes – yes
No - 0

Certification Pursuant to Virginia Code 2.2-3712 were only public business matters (1) lawfully exempted from open-meeting requirements and (2) identified in the closed-meeting motion discussed in closed meeting?

Roll Call: Councilor Pelham - Yes
Mayor Bennett - Yes
Councilor Randolph - Yes
Councilor Holloway - Yes
Vice Mayor Partin - Yes
Councilor Gore - Yes
Councilor Denton - Yes

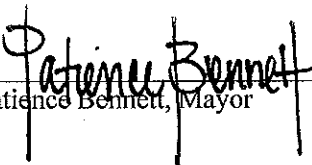
Passes – Ayes – 7
No – 0

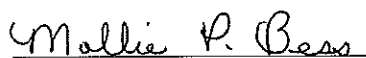
Motion made by Councilor Gore and seconded by Councilor Pelham to issue an RFP to solicit multiple firms to serve as the City Attorney for Hopewell and allow the Mayor to appoint the person on an interim basis so that we may have an attorney for our next meeting.

Roll Call: Councilor Pelham - Yes
Mayor Bennett - Yes
Councilor Randolph - Yes
Councilor Holloway - Yes
Vice Mayor Partin - Yes
Councilor Gore - Yes
Councilor Denton - No

Passes – Ayes – 6
No – 1

Meeting Adjourned


Patience Bennett, Mayor


Mollie Bess, Acting City Clerk