



# City of Hampton

22 Lincoln Street  
Hampton, VA 23669  
[www.hampton.gov](http://www.hampton.gov)

## Council Approved Minutes - Final City Council Legislative Session

*Mayor Jimmy Gray*

*Vice Mayor Steven L. Brown*

*Councilmember Randy C. Bowman, Sr.*

*Councilmember Carolyn S. Campbell*

*Councilmember Michelle Taylor Ferebee*

*Councilmember Hope L. Harper*

*Councilmember Martha M. Mugler*

*STAFF: Mary Bunting, City Manager*

*Courtney R. Sydnor, City Attorney*

*Katherine K. Glass, MMC, Clerk of Council*

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**Wednesday, January 28, 2026**

**6:30 PM**

**Council Chambers**

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### CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Gray called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. All members of the City Council were present.

**Present:** 7 - Councilmember Randy C. Bowman Sr., Vice Mayor Steven L. Brown, Councilmember Carolyn S. Campbell, Councilmember Michelle T. Ferebee, Councilmember Hope L. Harper, Councilmember Martha Mugler and Mayor Jimmy Gray

### JIMMY GRAY PRESIDED

### INVOCATION: Councilwoman Carolyn S. Campbell

Councilwoman Campbell gave the invocation.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG

### MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Mayor Gray thanked the City employees who handled last weekend's winter weather event so well and wished them well as we may have to respond to another weather event this coming weekend. He also called upon the City Manager who shared her appreciation for the City's staff.

Mayor Gray thanked Ms. Bunting for consistently keeping Council informed during extreme weather events.

## CONSENT AGENDA

Clerk of Council Katherine Glass read the protocol for the consent agenda and a summary of the consent items.

### Approval of the Consent Agenda

Motion made by Councilmember Mugler, seconded by Councilmember Harper, to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 7 - Councilmember Bowman Sr., Vice Mayor Brown, Councilmember Campbell, Councilmember Ferebee, Councilmember Harper, Councilmember Mugler and Mayor Gray

1. [26-0026](#) Resolution to Amend the Fiscal Year 2026 Council Approved Budget to Appropriate \$610,000 from the Coliseum Fund's Net Position to the Coliseum Fund Capital Improvement and Maintenance Accounts  
Item approved.

**Aye:** 7 - Councilmember Bowman Sr., Vice Mayor Brown, Councilmember Campbell, Councilmember Ferebee, Councilmember Harper, Councilmember Mugler and Mayor Gray

2. [26-0021](#) Resolution to Approve an Encroachment Agreement Pursuant to Hampton City Code § 34-86 Between the City of Hampton and Lumos Networks Inc. d/b/a Segra to Allow an Encroachment into the City's Right of Way for Installation of New Fiber Optic Cable, Conduit, and a Handhole Within and Along the City's Right of Way Known as E. Queen Street and Wine Street

Attachments: [Encroachment Agreement](#)  
[Presentation](#)

Item approved.

**Aye:** 7 - Councilmember Bowman Sr., Vice Mayor Brown, Councilmember Campbell, Councilmember Ferebee, Councilmember Harper, Councilmember Mugler and Mayor Gray

3. [26-0025](#) Ordinance to Amend and Reenact the City Code of the City of Hampton, Virginia by Amending Chapter 37, Titled "Taxation," Article I, Titled "In General," Section 37-2, Titled "Refunds"

Attachments: [City Code 37-2 Refunds - Ordinance Amendment 1.16.26](#)

Item approved.

**Aye:** 7 - Councilmember Bowman Sr., Vice Mayor Brown, Councilmember Campbell, Councilmember Ferebee, Councilmember Harper, Councilmember Mugler and Mayor Gray

4. [26-0018](#) Approval of the minutes from the legislative session of December 10, 2025, and the work and legislative sessions of January 14, 2026.

Item approved.

**Aye:** 7 - Councilmember Bowman Sr., Vice Mayor Brown, Councilmember Campbell, Councilmember Ferebee, Councilmember Harper, Councilmember Mugler and Mayor Gray

[26-0040](#) Resolution of the City Council of the City of Hampton, Virginia Confirming the Declaration and Termination of a Local Emergency Made Necessary by the Winter Storm of January 2026, Declared on January 24, 2026, and Terminated on January 26, 2026, by the Hampton Director of Emergency Management

Attachments: [Declaration 260124](#)  
[Termination 260126](#)

## PRESENTATIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS

There were no presentations this evening.

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

Ms. Glass read the protocol for public hearings.

## Rezoning

5. [25-0322](#) Rezoning Application No. 25-0322: by Gloria Higuera Lopez to Rezone +/-0.15 acres at 1700 E Pembroke Ave [LRSN: 12003841] from Limited Commercial (C-2) District to the One-family Residential (R-9) District with Proffered Conditions in Order to Construct a Single-Family Dwelling on a Vacant Lot

Attachments: [Application](#)  
[Proffer Agreement](#)  
[Staff Report](#)  
[Presentation](#)  
[Presentation Updated](#)

City Manager Mary Bunting introduced Planning and Zoning Manager Milissa Story to make the presentation.

Ms. Story provided preliminary information about the rezoning application including the site location on the Zoning and Future Land Use maps, and a summary of what is being proposed. She also summarized public policies from the Hampton Community Plan and Buckroe Master Plan related to the application. Some of the policies reference encouraging a mix of housing types; safeguarding the integrity of existing residential neighborhoods; establishing single-family residential development that provides character of the Buckroe neighborhood; and Pembroke Avenue being an improvement opportunity area.

Ms. Story concluded the presentation with the following information. Proffered conditions are related to adherence to the concept plan and elevations; building materials; site plan approval; and compliance with the zoning ordinance. Staff's analysis is that this project furthers adopted policy for the Buckroe Master Plan, the proposal would be consistent with characteristics of the neighborhood, it fulfills housing demand in the Buckroe area, and improves the image of the Pembroke Corridor. A community meeting was held on January 22, at which staff was present and reported no negative feedback from the public. Staff and the Planning Commission recommend approval.

Ms. Story opened the floor for questions, but none were posed.

The applicant's attorney, Allen Tanner, greeted those on the dais and made the following statement: I just want to say, to start off, this has been a very long experience for my clients. They were very determined. This is their dream, to be able to do this, and staff and Milissa and her team have been delightful to work with, caring, informative and really helped them through this process. They're very hopeful for the decision you're about to make, and I have truly been impressed. First

of all, we had the meeting at your model home on Smiley Road. Wow. What you're trying to do in these neighborhoods is a wonderful thing. That is a beautiful home, and it's in an area that I know for years, it's been up and down, but you're bringing it back. I want to thank you for the staff and what Milissa did, and hopefully you will grant this motion.

The Lopez family members in attendance stood to be recognized. Mr. Tanner thanked City staff for making it possible for the language barrier to be overcome.

Mayor Gray opened the floor for questions from Council, but none were posed.

Mayor Gray opened the public hearing. There were no speakers signed up and the Mayor closed the public hearing.

A motion was made by Councilmember Hope Harper and seconded by Councilmember Randy Bowman, Sr., that this Rezoning Application approved with seven (7) proffered conditions. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 7 - Councilmember Bowman Sr., Vice Mayor Brown, Councilmember Campbell, Councilmember Ferebee, Councilmember Harper, Councilmember Mugler and Mayor Gray

## Use Permits

6. [25-0266](#) Use Permit Application by Margaret Lefranc Art Foundation, Inc. to Permit the Development of a Private Museum at 1609 and 1611 Aberdeen Rd [LRSNs: 3003863 and 3003862]

**Attachments:** [Application](#)  
[Conditions](#)  
[Staff Report](#)  
[PC Presentation](#)  
[CC Presentation](#)  
[Applicants Presentation](#)  
[CC Presentation REV](#)  
[Applicant Presentation REV](#)

City Manager Bunting called on Planning and Zoning Manager Milissa Story to make

presentation.

Ms. Story shared information about the application including the site location, images of what is being proposed, and several policies from the Hampton Community Plan and Hampton Youth Commission which are applicable to the application. Some of the policies are related to promoting high quality design and site planning that is compatible with surrounding development; promoting family, school and community interaction at the neighborhood level; and creating more public spaces dedicated to youth and increasing adult awareness and support for youth space.

Ms. Story concluded the presentation with the following information. Staff's analysis is that this provides needed educational services to the community; the proposed location is compatible with surrounding land uses; and there will be minimal impact to the surrounding neighborhood, considering the uses permitted by right in the C2 zoning district. There are a number of conditions, some of which are related to issuance of permit, conceptual plan, property line vacation, landscape plan, adherence to the Coliseum Central design standards, fencing and screening, hours of operation, traffic circulation, capacity, certificate of occupancy, compliance with laws and revocation and nullification. A community meeting was held on July 8, 2025, with no opposition, although general concerns were raised about traffic circulation, drainage and sewage. Staff and the Planning Commission recommend approval with 15 conditions.

Mayor Gray opened the floor for questions, but none were posed.

The applicant, Sandra McKenzie, CEO and President of the Margaret Lefranc Art Foundation, Inc., Museum, introduced herself as such, greeted those on the dais and made the following statement: I'm here to address some questions, which you had last time. As a brief history, that is what the property looked like 14 years ago and this is what we are wanting it to look like today with the Margaret Lefranc Art Museum. Four years ago, I made an offer, or first, I met with the City staff, including Michael Hayes, and at that time, they gave me the blessing for the Margaret Lefranc Art Foundation, or museum. I received their support, and only then did I actually close on the property with their blessing. And then the Planning Commission approved it and then we met in November, and then in December, it got tabled until now, and so here we are. One of the questions you had was, what kind of transportation am I using? It's a transit very much like what you have in your fleet. It's everything the vehicle movement requires only one reverse and one forward motion. All circulation is fully contained within the parking lot. Vehicles safely enter and exit a 24-foot aisle. They park within the standard 9x18 spaces. There's no maneuvering that occurs in the public right-of-way on Edgewood, so there's no

interference with traffic. There's a single, controlled entrance and exit, which prevents any circling on Edgewood, so there is no interference on Edgewood at all. What we have done, also, is we have, if you look at the parking lot, Donald Davis has widened the entrance onto Aberdeen Road. Now here's the crux of the debate, if you want to call it that. Traffic and trip generation - using the Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation Manual, this 3,900 square foot museum generates six peak traffic hour trips, three cars in, three cars out. Now, if you had a commercial venture there, during peak hours, you would have 12 to 15 cars in, 12 to 15 cars out. Mine has less impact. In fact, I could almost stand here and say that it'll have no impact. And the reason is, my operating hours are from 10am to 4pm and that is different from the people on Edgewood who will be going to work. So, that avoids any neighborhood peak travel times. My hours miss their hours.

Mr. Donald Davis greeted those on the dais and staff and made the following statement: I'm located at 3630 George Washington Memorial Highway in Yorktown. I'm a land surveyor with Davis and Associates. We prepared the site plan that you have in front of you tonight. There's some issues, I think they came up with the City Council meeting back in December about the drainage on this particular site. The drainage here is using the... mandated by the State of Virginia, and it's mandated to the locality Hampton also. And we use what's called the runoff reduction method. We're actually reducing the amount of runoff from the site itself. Instead of the drainage coming off of the site and going downstream, the drainage will go into three individual BMPs. Those BMPs are designed based on, again, state standards, and the amount of drainage that leaves the site will be substantially less than what occurs there today. So, this is really good. It won't impact downstream at all on this piece of property. Now, one of the other things that was discussed was the number of parking spaces here. The number of parking spaces are the required number by Hampton's standards. Again, I took a look at the manual - I.T. manual for VDOT (Virginia Department of Transportation) and also for the federal government, and the number of spaces here, again, are greatly reduced from what could be designed and used in this particular district. So, the spaces here will actually have many fewer spaces than are what required. I'd be glad to answer any questions, if I could.

The below summarizes information provided by Mr. Davis in response to questions posed by Council. The plan does not permit school buses. Most vehicles will be able to park in the 9x18 parking spaces and will not impede traffic. The idea is that there will be minimal impact on traffic between 10AM and 4PM because most residents leave for work prior to 10AM and return after 4PM.

Ms. McKenzie shared the reasons why she believes this project should be approved, including it would be beneficial to the community as it will improve the appearance of the property and prevent criminal activity; staff supported it and it was deemed

compliant; it provides an opportunity to have something of value in the community for children, adults, college students and others; it provides an opportunity for a partnership with the Virginia Peninsula Community College; there will be limited traffic impacts; and it will deliver lasting educational and neighborhood benefits.

Additional discussion took place among the members of Council, Ms. McKenzie and staff. Topics of discussion included exceptions to the hours of operation; additional efforts to receive input from neighbors; and the impact the project will have on traffic.

Vice Mayor Brown expressed concern that there is no way to predict how this project will impact traffic during specific hours of the day.

Prior to the vote, Councilman Bowman shared the reasons he will vote no. In summary, he feels obligated to consider what the residents desire for their neighborhood; he has experienced negative traffic impacts when visiting the area; and he is concerned about parking and the entrance and exit. He concluded his comments saying that he supports businesses in Hampton, but does not believe that this is the right fit for this neighborhood, and perhaps it could work elsewhere in the City, like Phoebus.

At Councilwoman Mugler's suggestion, Ms. Story reviewed the diagram of the proposed entrance and exit of the museum and reiterated how the traffic flow would work. Councilwoman Mugler made comments about this being a good project that, in her opinion, will not cause a big traffic infraction.

Ms. Bunting noted that she will direct the Public Works Department to re-do the traffic study if Council would like more clarity about traffic impacts.

At Councilman Bowman's request, Ms. Story spoke more about how vehicles will enter, exit and park around the businesses on Edgewood.

Prior to casting his vote, Vice Mayor Brown shared that he is uncomfortable voting up or down right now, particularly if plans are underway for another traffic study.

Mayor Gray opened the public hearing. There were no speakers signed up to speak and Mayor Gray closed the public hearing.

A motion was made by Councilmember Carolyn Campbell and seconded by Councilmember Martha Mugler, that this Use Permit be approved with fifteen (15) conditions as found in the



agenda package, with the conditions modified to require "substantial conformance" rather than "compliance" with the Conceptional Plan. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 5 - Councilmember Campbell, Councilmember Ferebee, Councilmember Harper, Councilmember Mugler and Mayor Gray

**Nay:** 1 - Councilmember Bowman Sr.

**Abstained:** 1 - Vice Mayor Brown

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Glass read the protocol for public comment.

Mayor Gray called on the first speaker, Johnnie Carroll.

Mr. Johnnie Carroll greeted those on the dais and the citizenry assembled, introduced himself as Johnnie B. Carroll Jr., and made the following statement. I am proud to call myself a citizen of the City of Hampton. Last Thursday, I had the opportunity to attend a meeting at the Hampton Roads Convention Center where I received information about Hampton's strategic Master Plan update, such as you see here. In response to this presentation, I have developed this presentation of my own. Now, this is a lemon, highly acidic and extremely distasteful. When most persons receive lemons, they think all is lost. However, with careful planning and purposeful execution, a person can enjoy lemon custard ice cream, lemon meringue pie, and my personal favorite, on a hot summer's day, a nice, tall glass of ice-cold lemonade. That, ladies and gentlemen, is what we must do with this City. We must look beyond the ordinary, and focus on achieving the extraordinary. This is not just for ourselves, but for our children who are witnessing such an act. Therefore, I ask you to look beyond the obvious and achieve greatness. I thank you very much for having the chance to make this presentation, and may you have a wonderful evening. Good night.

Mayor Gray called on the next speaker, Jason Leighton.

Mr. Jason Leighton greeted those on the dais, City staff, and his neighbors, stated his name as Jay Leighton and made the following statement: I live over in Buckroe, and like a lot of folks here, I love this place just enough to be a little protective of it. Buckroe didn't become what it is by accident. It started as a place people wanted to visit. It started as a place people dreamed of visiting, and it became a place people could actually live. It's not a resort, it's not a gated experience, it's a real working family beach community and that small town beach feeling that everybody talks

about didn't come from exclusivity. It came from open access. Buckroe has always been a place that people gathered - families, neighbors, generations. It wasn't built to keep people out. It was built to bring people together. Last night, at the Buckroe Improvement League, we heard a developer talking about how they want to come in and preserve Buckroe's heritage, its community and its identity, but what was presented felt a lot like paving paradise to put up a parking lot, only this time with better fixings. The proposal includes single-family homes, multifamily units and luxury apartments. When I asked what the starting price was, the gentleman said it would be \$500,000, rent would be well over \$200,000. The average home price in Buckroe, the average rent in Buckroe is significantly lower. And when development begins at a price that most of the existing community could never afford, that's not preservation, that's replacement. Nobody here is saying Buckroe doesn't need development. We desperately do. But, development should focus first on the people that already live there. It shouldn't be tailored primarily for people yet to come. The design tells a clear story, a large, inward facing complex with its own parking, courtyards, gyms, pools. That doesn't invite neighborhood in, it blocks it. It turns its back on it, both physically, visually, socially. It puts a wall between the community and the beach that defines it. Green space disappears, and that green space isn't excess land waiting to be optimized. It's breathing room. Removing it means higher temperatures, worse flooding, fewer places for neighbors to gather, and when the tallest building in your neighborhood takes the closest position to the water, access shrinks, and community gets managed, this time behind an HOA. And, let's be honest about luxury developments, they're self-contained by design. People use their own gyms, swim in their own pools, stay inside their own amenities, and that doesn't strengthen Buckroe, it bypasses it. Buckroe deserves investment, but investment that strengthens the people who are already there, protects the waterfront that we all share and love and respects the character that made this place worth living in the first place, because when development prices out the community that it's claiming to honor and protect. That's not preservation, it's replacement.

Mayor Gray called on the next speaker, Teresa Roundy.

Ms. Teresa Roundy greeted those on the dais, introduced herself as Teresa Roundy and made the following statement: I'm a resident of Hampton, and I just wanted to go over - ran out of time last meeting for the cemetery. A report that I gave you that was written by the lawyer who's also a mayor. This article that I gave you, written by Ernest W. Porta, Jr., was in the Virginia Lawyer Register, the official publication for the Virginia State Bar. So that's where that came from. As I said, he's currently an attorney and a sitting mayor, and in this, he references all sorts of Virginia codes, case law and everything, and he says ownership does not convey a right to remove remains or destroy, deface or otherwise do injury to the site, and any willful or malicious action to such effect is a felony, but there is no affirmative duty on the part

of the owner to maintain the cemetery. They are free to essentially abandon it. Now - and we also went over the fact that an inactive cemetery still contains bodies. A former cemetery is where all 100 percent of the bodies have been legally removed. So, I just wanted to make sure that y'all are aware of that, and that this report or this paper was written by a lawyer and a mayor, and basically, once it's a cemetery, it's always a cemetery, and there's no way of removing 100 percent of the bodies from a cemetery that the oldest grave that I can document is 1885. You can't - and that was information also confirmed by the Virginia Cemetery Board, so thank you.

Mayor Gray called on the next speaker, Robert Smith.

Mr. Robert Smith greeted those on the dais and made the following statement: It appears that ICE has been given approval to turn our cities under Democratic leadership upside down. Question, what is the difference between what happened in Birmingham in the '60s, and what is happening in Minneapolis right now? Several months ago, I spoke with Delegate Ward and jokingly said, we need you in Washington, DC., and she said, No, I'm just trying to keep the mess happening in DC away from here. So, my question is, how do we prevent the chaos happening in other cities away from Hampton? And, two, how can we, the citizens, help? Thank you.

Mayor Gray called on the next speaker, Craig Knopp.

Mr. Craig Knopp greeted those on the dais, introduced himself as Craig Knopp and made the following statement: As you guys know, I like to be involved in a lot of different stuff, whether it be volunteering, bills, or just seeing what we can do to help make us a better community. A couple of things. If you guys haven't been paying attention, there's a lot of different bills coming out, different issues. Some of the issues I have are that it looks like we're going to be taxed on several different areas a lot here additional revenue. Now, one of the bills looks like it's going to throw a lot of that revenue back into the City. So, my question is, is there a plan to decrease property taxes this year with that additional revenue coming in? Or are we looking at that as growth revenue for the City, for us to go and have new projects or something like that? One of the other things, too, is lately, one of the roads close to my house has a pothole on it, and I was just wondering if I can get somebody from the City to take a look at that. It's on Markham Drive and Fleming Drive. Then one of the other things that I have an issue with is that some of the delegates and senators brand new during this General Assembly that they got in there, and not even a couple days into it, they decided that they needed a 300 percent increase in salary. That is absurd. Absurd for somebody to go in there (inaudible word) - only a couple days, brand new into the job, saying, hey, I don't make enough, let me give myself a 300 percent increase. So, I strongly would like the City Council to use our lobbying powers to tell

our state delegates and state senators to say, no, you guys wanted this job. You know what the pay was, do your job and they're only in session 45 days or 60 days every year. That's it. Forty-five or 60 days and they're asking for a pay raise - it is utterly ridiculous. Now, one of the other things that I was looking at that I did not realize is that, currently, there's a law out there for City employees, school board employees or constitutional officers' employees, to get a grant for housing for \$25,000. Now I didn't know about that. That's - I don't know if it's good or bad, but the issue is, is the amendment that came to adjust this law that's out there, Right now, they want to do away with the 25,000 and have no limit now that - that is an issue, because this housing is going to be offset by City funding. Now, I looked at the City and I looked at School Board - constitutional officers, I did not have a chance to get to and look at that. Now, my question is, I could not find where we have adopted an agenda or, excuse me, a law to help with that housing. I see that there's other additional things out there. Thank you.

Mayor Gray called on the next speaker, Alekzander Cheremeteff.

Mr. Alekzander Cheremeteff greeted those on the dais, introduced himself as Alekzander Cheremeteff and stated that he goes by Alek and made the following statement: I'm a resident here in Hampton. I'm a homeowner and a foster parent for the City. I have graduated from Old Dominion University with my degree in cyber security. I'm a Marine Corps veteran where I learned about surveillance and data links, and I currently work as a system administrator for a government command and control system. I'm here to raise concerns about the use of Flock cameras around the City. The company and their cameras have major security flaws. They failed to address them, and the nature of the data that they collect goes far beyond the scope. Multiple independent security researchers have found and published lists of vulnerabilities that these devices have, which include exploits to gain full access to the camera systems and the pictures that they have taken. These cameras were erected on public property by a private surveillance company and don't adequately secure the data that they capture. My second concern is the disingenuous nature of their data aggregation. They're advertised as a license plate reader, but they take pictures of much more than cars. The company is fighting lawsuits across the nation, including a federal suit that's ongoing in Norfolk right now, for their intrusive AI driven facial recognition and persistent monitoring. We went from a few cameras to hundreds across the 757, and they track everything from your commute to work, the stores you visit, and they build profiles around those behaviors. They've created an unconstitutionally warrantless, broad search by casting a wide net of private information based on your daily movements. These surveillance cameras cross the line of reasonable expectation of privacy, even for a public space, and how long until a camera is in every street of every neighborhood, and how long until that data is exposed and used to hurt our community? Now we know they take and store

pictures way more than license plates, and we know that they don't secure that information, so I want to know why Hampton has partnered with them. I also demand the City of Hampton immediately cancel their contract with Flock Safety until an independent audit addressing these concerns is conducted. Give us back our public property and you can keep your billionaire-funded mass citizen surveillance systems. Thank you.

Mayor Gray called on the next speaker, Travis Adams.

Mr. Travis Adams greeted those on the dais and made the following statement: I'm here to provide an update on HB10 I talked to you guys about a couple weeks ago. Unfortunately, it looks like it will die in committee, but HB282 looks like it will continue on. HB282 rather than HB10, is for all localities. Virginia HB282 is some specific localities that have asked for the ability to tax land and improvements at a separate rate. So, Roanoke, Charlottesville, Falls Church and Newport News, that's passed the House of Delegates, and will move on to the senate. I'm happy, of course, that we might see progress with this policy elsewhere, especially in Hampton Roads, and I'm here to continue to hopefully convince you to ask for the next General Assembly, for Hampton to be added to that list. As most of you know, in the final year of his life, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., launched the Poor People's Campaign. By that point, King had concluded that civil rights victories alone were insufficient, that persistent material insecurity was undermining both racial equality and democratic stability, and where do we go from here? The book he published in the last year of his life, he argued that our economic arrangements themselves have become a moral issue. One of the thinkers King cited in developing his critique was Henry George, a 19th century author of progress and poverty. George's insight was based on observation. Cities were growing, developing and accelerating, and productivity was rising, yet poverty and instability persisted. The benefits of progress were not flowing primarily to people who were working or building, but to those who owned land in the right place at the right time. George pointed out that land is fundamentally different from other things we tax. It isn't created by effort. Its value is created by public decisions and shared activity. When a city builds roads or transit, when neighborhoods become safer, when businesses cluster and jobs grow, land values rise, not because of what any one owner did, but because of what the community as a whole did. We can see this dynamic clearly here in Hampton. Since 2021, even as we've decreased the tax rate, my residential property bill has increased by about \$1,300. Over that same period, the Willow Oaks Shopping Center, which we all know and love, saw its tax bill decrease from about \$222,000 to \$182,000. This is about incentives. When homes and improvements carry rising tax burdens, while valuable land can sit idle at a lower cost, we should not be surprised by speculation, underutilization, higher rents and delayed redevelopment. These outcomes are not accidental. They're predictable results of policy choices. Dr. King warned against

what he calls socialism for the rich and rugged individualism for the poor. When working residents see their tax bills rise and when large vacant properties benefit from remaining idle, you can't help but feel like we're ignoring his warning. Property tax reform is a critical policy in the 21st Century. Taxing blight is a good first step. I hope we can continue to lead on this issue. Thank you.

Mayor Gray called on the last speaker, Jeannie Belgrave.

Ms. Jeannie Belgrave greeted those on the dais, introduced herself as Jeannie Belgrave and made the following statement: Today, I just have a couple of things. One is safety on roads that have big, big, big holes. There is one big one in Denny's and Mercury Boulevard. I don't know if the City takes care of that, or if it's the Denny's property manager there who takes care of that, but it's huge, and it's a safety hazard. So, if we can do something about that, that will be great.

In response to Mayor Gray, Ms. Belgrave clarified that the pothole she referred to is located in the entrance of Denny's parking lot.

Ms. Belgrave continue: And then the other point that I would like to make today is, when the City of Hampton contracts a company, and this company, let's see, renders services such as fixing a road, do they do that with warranties or insurance, or the City has to pay every time a road is fixed? To the money - you know, like, how is it - how does it work when a company renders services, and one easy example is we need a street fixed. So, they come in, they fix it, then later on, let's say, in two years, they need to re-do the fixing. Do we pay that again, or the City pays that again? Or is it a warranty and insurance in place that will take care of that? That's really it. Thank you so much, and it's nice to see you all.

The following summarizes Ms. Bunting's responsive remarks. She did not address legislative matters as they are not within her purview. The City does repave roads, however, when work is done again, it is typically the result of a utility company doing work, in which case, that company is responsible for repaving. For example, the work being done on Fox Hill Road. The pothole Ms. Belgrave referenced is the private owner's responsibility as the City only takes care of potholes on public roads. Ms. Bunting thanked Mr. Cheremeteff and all other foster parents in the community for what they do. She indicated that staff will review the documents Ms. Roundy provided and will advise Council on that as needed. With regard to Buckroe, currently there is no active development proposal before Council and Council has indicated that they prefer to have an updated Buckroe Master Plan first. She thanked Mr. Carroll for attending the strategic plan meeting which had a good turnout and discussions are underway about how to expand efforts, particularly getting the younger audience involved.

## GENERAL ITEMS

### Appointments

8. [25-0349](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Citizens Police Advisory Group (CPAG)
- A motion was made by Vice Mayor Steven Brown and seconded by Councilmember Martha Mugler, that this Appointment be deferred to the City Council Legislative Session, due back on 2/11/2026. The motion carried by the following vote:
- Aye:** 7 - Councilmember Bowman Sr., Vice Mayor Brown, Councilmember Campbell, Councilmember Ferebee, Councilmember Harper, Councilmember Mugler and Mayor Gray
9. [25-0352](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Citizens' Unity Commission (CUC)
- A motion was made by Vice Mayor Steven Brown and seconded by Councilmember Martha Mugler, that this Appointment be deferred to the City Council Legislative Session, due back on 2/11/2026. The motion carried by the following vote:
- Aye:** 7 - Councilmember Bowman Sr., Vice Mayor Brown, Councilmember Campbell, Councilmember Ferebee, Councilmember Harper, Councilmember Mugler and Mayor Gray
11. [26-0022](#) Consideration of an Appointment to the Peninsula Alcohol Safety Action Program Advisory Board
- A motion was made by Vice Mayor Steven Brown and seconded by Councilmember Martha Mugler, that this Appointment be deferred to the City Council Legislative Session, due back on 2/11/2026. The motion carried by the following vote:
- Aye:** 7 - Councilmember Bowman Sr., Vice Mayor Brown, Councilmember Campbell, Councilmember Ferebee, Councilmember Harper, Councilmember Mugler and Mayor Gray

12. [26-0023](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Golf Course Advisory Committee
- A motion was made by Vice Mayor Steven Brown and seconded by Councilmember Martha Mugler, that this Appointment be deferred to the City Council Legislative Session, due back on 2/11/2026. The motion carried by the following vote:
- Aye:** 7 - Councilmember Bowman Sr., Vice Mayor Brown, Councilmember Campbell, Councilmember Ferebee, Councilmember Harper, Councilmember Mugler and Mayor Gray
7. [25-0252](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Hampton Redevelopment & Housing Authority (HRHA)
- A motion was made by Vice Mayor Steven Brown and seconded by Councilmember Martha Mugler, to appoint Dr. Marian Clifton to serve a first full term until September, 30, 2029, to reappoint Shelton Tucker to a second term until October 25, 2029, and to reappoint Clarissa Wright to a second term until February 28, 2030. The motion carried by the following vote:
- Aye:** 7 - Councilmember Bowman Sr., Vice Mayor Brown, Councilmember Campbell, Councilmember Ferebee, Councilmember Harper, Councilmember Mugler and Mayor Gray
10. [26-0020](#) Consideration of an Appointment to the Board of Zoning Appeals
- A motion was made by Vice Mayor Steven Brown seconded by Councilmember Martha Mugler to request the Circuit Court to reappoint Edwin "Chip" A. McErlean to a second term until March 31, 2031. The motion carried by the following vote:
- Aye:** 7 - Councilmember Bowman Sr., Vice Mayor Brown, Councilmember Campbell, Councilmember Ferebee, Councilmember Harper, Councilmember Mugler and Mayor Gray
13. [26-0024](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Hampton Senior Citizens Advisory Committee

**Attachments:** [Attendance Report - Senior Citizens Advisory Committee](#)



A motion was made by Vice Mayor Steven Brown seconded by Councilmember Martha Mugler, to reappoint Tonya Grant to a second term until February 28, 2030, reappoint Lewis Dawley, and James Goodbody to second terms until March 30, 2030; and appoint Lavern Campbell to a first term until March 30, 2030.

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 7 - Councilmember Bowman Sr., Vice Mayor Brown, Councilmember Campbell, Councilmember Ferebee, Councilmember Harper, Councilmember Mugler and Mayor Gray

#### **REPORTS BY CITY MANAGER, CITY COUNCIL, STAFF, COMMITTEES**

There were no reports.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS NEW BUSINESS**

There were no items of new business.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

#### **Contact Info:**

**Clerk of Council, 757-727-6315, [council@hampton.gov](mailto:council@hampton.gov)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jimmy Gray  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Katherine K. Glass, MMC  
Clerk of Council

Date approved by Council \_\_\_\_\_