



# 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*  
*Councilmember Randy C. Bowman, Sr.*  
*Vice Mayor Steven L. Brown*  
*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, February 12, 2025**

**6:30 PM**

**Council Chambers**

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### CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Gray called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with all members of the City Council 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 - Vice Mayor Steven L. Brown

Vice Mayor Brown gave the invocation.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG

### MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Mayor Gray shared information on some upcoming community listening sessions he has scheduled. He announced that the sessions were postponed while he recovered from surgery, but sessions are scheduled to take place on February 19 from 6:00-7:30 pm at the Fox Hill Neighborhood Community Center and on March 5 from 6:00-7:30 pm at the Phoebus Community Center. Sessions will also take place on March 19 at the Northampton Community Center and on April 2 at Aberdeen Elementary School and more sessions will be scheduled. The Mayor encouraged those in the community to attend the sessions as this is budget season and assessment cards have recently gone out. Other topics for discussion about the

City are also welcomed to be brought forth during the sessions. He said that he looks forward to interacting with those in the community to learn about their hopes and aspirations for Hampton.

Mary Bunting, City Manager, shared information on how the City plans to work to address potential funding cuts from the current state of the Federal government. She encouraged those who want more information about this to watch the video of today's work session online. She then summarized what was shared during the afternoon session: There have been executive orders about freezing Federal funds, followed by some challenges in court, suspensions and other activity leaving an unclear environment. While most of Hampton's operating budget is dependent upon local and state resources, we have been successful in getting Federal grants. Most recently, we received a \$20 million EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) grant to deal with flooding in the Aberdeen Gardens area. We assessed those types of grants to see whether they were at risk for pullback via President Trump's plan. There has not been a lot of discussion about pulling back on transportation projects, but other projects (like the Flood Mitigation Program Grant) fit that category. Discussions are underway with Council about doing a risk assessment on our Federal grants. If there is a high-risk potential for being pulled back (such as with the EPA grant) we will not spend money until we have clarity that we have the authority to spend it. In other cases, such as road projects, we are continuing to submit for reimbursements and continue to move forward. We have asked the Federal agencies that we receive grants from for clarification about whether they have authority to process our reimbursements and authorize us to continue to spend. In some cases, we have received an affirmative, but in other cases, we have received word not to spend money.

Ms. Bunting suggested that we be as conservative as possible so that we do not put the taxpayers on the hook for money for which we may not get reimbursed. In addition, there are approximately 80 positions that are supported through Federal money that are important to the community that could potentially be in jeopardy. Some of these include victim witness counselors and domestic violence coordinators. Ms. Bunting indicated that she asked Council if staff could have their concurrence to fund these Federally-funded positions that meet a critical crisis need, until things get sorted out - even if it means that local dollars pay for it. She reminded everyone about the City's fund balance, a savings account for unanticipated things, which could potentially be used to cover these positions. She noted that she believes she has Council's consent to do so.

Lastly, Ms. Bunting spoke about people who are dependent on Federal work and those who were offered to resign with pay or potentially be terminated. She also spoke about agencies being targeted to downsize and that she is unsure about how

these national targets would impact us locally. She reminded everyone that when people are concerned about their jobs, they tend to spend less which may result in the City receiving less local tax money which supports City services and local businesses. As such, she has suggested to Council that we take care of our own and support one another as Hamptonians. Ms. Bunting closed her comments stating that there are no easy answers, but it will be dealt with on a day-by-day basis. She emphasized that she is unable to predict what will happen with the tax rate and the budget, but assured everyone that Council and the community will be kept informed about how this will impact the community as new information is received.

## CONSENT AGENDA

Clerk of Council Katherine Glass read the protocol for the consent agenda.

### Approval of the Consent Agenda

Motion made by Councilmember Mugler, and 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. [25-0015](#) Resolution to Amend the Fiscal Year 2025 Council Approved Budget to Accept and Appropriate the FY 2025 Operation Ceasefire Grant Program-Commonwealth's Anti Violence Initiative and Resources (CAVIAR) Program - Prosecution Grant Awarded by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services

**Attachments:** [CAVIAR Ceasefire Grant](#)  
[CAVIAR Grant Proposal Overview 2025-26 3](#)  
[OGMS Ceasefire grant revised 11524](#)

2. [25-0020](#) Resolution to Approve an Encroachment Agreement Pursuant to Hampton City Code § 34-86 Between the City of Hampton and LGBT Life Center to Allow an Encroachment into a Portion of a City of Hampton Drainage and Utility Easement for the Installation of a Steel Fence

**Attachments:** [Encroachment Agreement - 20 Settlers Landing Rd - LGBT Life Center](#)  
[CC Briefing 2.12.25-20 Settlers Landing Rd](#)

Item approved.

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

## PRESENTATIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

Ms. Glass read the protocol for public hearings.

### Use Permits

3. [24-0539](#) Use Permit Application by Overflow LLC to Permit a Short-term Rental (STR) at 127 N Fourth St [LRSN 12006963]

Attachments: [Application](#)  
[Proposed Conditions](#)  
[Staff Report](#)  
[Presentation](#)

Ms. Bunting introduced the item and noted that this application was required to go through the use permit process due to the size of the property. She introduced City Planner Han Vu to review the presentation and provide the recommendation from the Planning Commission.

Ms. Vu greeted those on the dais and shared two maps of the site location on 4th Street.

Ms. Vu reviewed the procedure as it relates to short-term rentals in general. In summary, one permit is required per property; the proposal consists of three units in two buildings; the front is a single-family dwelling and the rear is a duplex; this is considered to be multi-family use under the Ordinance; and per the Zoning Ordinance, Multi-family use is exempt from the separation requirement.

Ms. Vu reviewed a slide which summarizes the adopted permitting process and noted that this application has exceeded the number of rentable bedrooms that is allowed under the zoning administrator permit. This is the reason for the use permit.

Next, Ms. Vu reviewed the proposal for a use permit to allow for a short-term rental in the two-family residential (R-8) District. She shared a slide which includes an image of the dwelling and lists details about the dwelling including the square footage and

the number of bedrooms and bathrooms in each unit.

Ms. Vu spoke about public policies which are applicable to this application. The Hampton Community plan refers to evaluating land use proposals from a number of perspectives, safeguarding the integrity of existing neighborhoods, encouraging a mix of land uses that is appropriate for each district, and expanding tourism.

The next section of the presentation includes a map of the Buckroe-1 zone; the proposed short-term rental areas and approved short-term rental areas; the history about short-term rentals; and a list of the recommended conditions for the use permit. Some of the recommended conditions are related to overnight lodging capacity (limited to 19); bedroom rental restrictions (no more than 8); common space limitations; minimum on-site parking requirements; events (not permitted); maximum number of people during the hours of 7 am - 10 pm (not exceed 38); the requirement for a responsible local contact person to be available to address conditions at the site; and ledger keeping requirements.

Ms. Vu stated that a community meeting was held on January 14, 2025, at which one resident was in attendance. The resident was curious about the short-term rental process (in general) established by the City. Ms. Vu stated that staff and the Planning Commission recommend approval with 15 conditions. Ms. Vu opened the floor for questions and noted that the applicant was present.

Councilmember Campbell referenced the slide about short-term rental history which indicates that there are four expired grace period short-term rentals and asked if staff is certain that they are not operating as short-term rentals.

Ms. Vu indicated that the individuals are aware that they have expired and these cases will be pursued with enforcement efforts. In response to Councilmember Campbell, Ms. Vu also clarified that if this one gets approved while an expired one is in existence, then the expired one would be in violation.

Mayor Gray offered the applicant an opportunity to speak, but the applicant did not speak.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

Mayor Gray opened the public hearing.

Mr. Dave Rogers greeted those on the dais and made the following statement: My name is Dave Rogers. I'm a resident in the neighborhood of Buckroe Beach, and I want to repeat that - the neighborhood of Buckroe Beach. The staff presentation is

just like everything else we've had for the short-term rentals, very good. I've been involved and my family has been involved in this from the very beginning, and my wife is one of the stakeholders at the stakeholder meetings. Our legislation for this is very good, except this type of property got left out. A very extensive process, and you just can't cover everything. This falls under the multi-family dwelling, and as I understand, the multi-family dwellings, the intention was condos, townhouses, apartment type buildings, not residences like we have in Buckroe Beach. This type of property is probably unique in the whole City. I don't know. I was a police officer in this City, all over town, and I don't know of any other properties like this, except in Buckroe, and all of these were built as small beach cottages. The first house I used to live in when I was a little boy, was nothing but a beach cottage. Once this gets approved... I did a tally this morning. I got on Airbnb. Once you approve this use permit within 123, 125, now 127 North Fourth Street, you can have 48 overnight guests. That means during the daytime, 96 people to try to park on very narrow Fourth Street with a 20-foot-wide asphalt road and no curb and gutter. My point of being here: there is no argument to deny the use permit. My point is to remind Council and City staff that there is some tweaking that needs to be done with the ordinance that we have. Again, the ordinance is very good. You just can't cover everything, and also, as this process is going along, I understand, and I've watched several Board of Zoning Appeals meetings. People are trying to fight the zoning administrator process. They're trying to get past that, and I'm sure in some short order, City Council will be under pressure to liberalize the rules and ask you not to do that until this all plays out. Thank you very much.

The Mayor indicated that Mr. Rogers was the only person signed up to speak. He closed the public hearing and called for the motion.

A motion was made by Councilmember Hope Harper and seconded by Councilmember Michelle Ferebee, that this Use Permit be approved with 15 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

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Glass read the protocol for the public comment period.

Mayor Gray called on the first speaker, Ms. Dana Mitchell, to come to the

free-standing microphone.

Ms. Dana Mitchell greeted those on the dais, introduced herself, and made the following statement: I'm the owner and operator of ButtarCups Fancy Facepainting. For the past 25 years, we have been a very successful business in the City of Hampton. We are also one of the most sought-after businesses in the City of Hampton, where we are booked in all seven to eight cities. I have recently just purchased a home, and me purchasing a home as a 1099 business owner, you know, it's a very overwhelming experience. My business partner, which is sitting in my lap, trying to get situated. His name is Sir Diddy Bob. He's also my business partner. He's also my emotional support animal, and we are the first and only all-natural retail, not now, but we're looking to add on retail as far as clothing and dog accessories. But at this moment, right now, we're Hampton Roads' first and only dog ice cream truck. Yes, you heard me - dog ice cream truck. We have an innovative business model that I have researched and developed and created. I know I only have three minutes, so I'll make it quick. During the COVID era, I had a friend of mine, Cameo Robertson, she passed away due to a diabetic coma. And, we all know how COVID took a mental toll on a lot of families and businesses. So, her son, Jamil, when she passed away, gave me full custody of Diddy. Animals can be very supportive, and he is my emotional support animal. I'm not like others that like to take pills or over-the-counter because of the different side-effects and the different long-lasting effects that they do have. Plus, I'm still young, and I just don't want to take no type of medicine like that. So, as a result of that, it was put on my heart by God to start a business with my dog. I've been researching this for a while. No one is doing this in Hampton Roads. The closest is in Henrico County and Chantilly. There is a young lady over in Virginia Beach that does have an ice cream parlor, but she just added on selling the dog ice cream, but she's not mobile. It was an exhausting process as far as purchasing a home. So, I went from August to January. I went through three properties, and I can finally say that I'm now a first-time homeowner in the great City of Hampton. In this process, my dog, Diddy, he basically calmed me down from anxiety, and as a result of that, I thought of having a great idea of starting a business with him. So, therefore, Dana and Diddy's Doggy Delectables was formed. All natural -

Mayor Gray indicated that Ms. Mitchell's speaking time had expired and called on the next speaker, Mr. Craig Knopp, to come forward followed by Mr. Chris Bowman.

Mr. Craig Knopp greeted those on the dais, introduced himself and made the following statement: I appreciate the time for allowing me to come up here and talk and use my three minutes. One of the things that we talked about, Mary, is we've been seeing a lot of change in the government here, a lot of cutting budget here and there. Now, when we see that, we're like, what's going to happen with that money?

Well, I'll tell you what. I want that money to come back to our community. And, there's only one way that that's going to happen - is if we, as a community, go out there and become outspoken, saying we want our money back. Okay, if this was wasteful spending, which it may have been, may not have been like you guys, I don't know what's all going on out there. We're being told that, you know, there's a lot of wasteful spending, but I would like us to take a proactive...be proactive and us, as City Council, generate a letter, send that out to Congressman Bobby Scott, Senator Warner and Senator Kaine, and let them know that, hey, if this money is truly out there, we want it coming back into our community so we can use it in our community. All right, that's one of the things I'd like to see. And, then what I'd like to see is if that money does come back, whether it be you know, five bucks, 100 million, I don't know - who knows what it is, but I want that money coming back to our taxpayers, and then when we have it come back here, whatever the amount is, let's try to offset our taxes, whether it be for 2026, 2025, whatever. Anyhow, that's what I'd like to see happen from this City Council. Thank you.

Mr. Chris Bowman greeted those on the dais and the Clerk of Council, introduced himself, and made the following statement: I come before you this evening, as Virginia Beach has ended support for Something in the Water Festival. I appealed to this Council to contact this organization to hold this event in Hampton. We have a perfect location, Fort Monroe. Fort Monroe, the past two years, has hosted the Supernova International Ska Festival, a three-day event with 36 bands. Attendance was approximately 5,000. Something in the Water was a two-day event with approximately 7,000 attending each day. Fort Monroe has the acreage to host such an event. It has the acreage for parking. In addition, Fort Monroe and City staff and others did an excellent job in coordinating this event. Like I, many of you attended. The economic impact for Virginia Beach was \$21.8 million. I'm asking Mayor Gray and this Council to aggressively pursue this festival as a potential economic impact for Hampton. It will be millions of dollars. Thank you.

Mayor Gray called for the next two speakers, Jeannie Belgrave and Joan Weaver, to come forward.

Ms. Jeannie Belgrave greeted those on the dais and made the following statement: Today, I have two things. The first one is when I was pursuing my first college degree, one of the things that I realized back in college is the first thing that is cut when speaking about budgets is the arts. So, I hope the City is, you know, is not the same thing for this City, since the arts, it's actually part of the fabric of our community. So, I hope the City always have some kind of budget for the arts, and talking about the arts, this coming up weekend, there is a historical event at the American theater, and I hope people are able to attend. It is a free event, but you still have to go to the website and not purchase, it's free, but you have to order a



ticket to reserve your seat. So, I hope you have the opportunity to go, because it is a - we don't know if we're going to have that again, since it's a diversity kind of inclusion organized by that organization. So, I hope you will have the opportunity to go and enjoy and the community too. My second thing is, I want to thank you for what you do and the money that you put together to embrace the City of Hampton to help our citizens who have pets. I'm a dog owner, and as a dog owner, I'm always looking for budget friendly ways to take care of my pets, and thanks to you guys, I've been able to, you know, get my pets vaccinated - because I have four dogs. Having them be able to take them to the park, to the beach, and not worried about if they're not vaccinated or not. And, I had the opportunity last year to have one of my dogs compete at the Convention Center. There was this event for dogs, and it won first place for best coat. How could I have a best coat? I had to have them vaccinated, good food and all that, and he earned his food. So, it was good for me. So, it was a win, win situation, but everything that the City does for either the arts or the dogs or pets in general is really, really appreciated. With all these budget constraints and decisions that you have to make, I hope you do not forget about the arts and our owners of, you know pets, pet owners. Thank you so much.

Ms. Joan Weaver greeted those on the dais and the Clerk of Council and made the following statement: I am here as a follow up to the work session that happened earlier today. I am happy to say that after 116 years and 73 years from his death, Virginia State School for the Deaf and Blind's founder, Mr. William Charles Ritter, is finally getting recognition, and I want everybody in here to take a good look at this man. Look good and look close. Hampton has been the seat of diversity, equity, inclusion for the longest time, before it was Vogue, we made it, and we will still continue to. This man's history - founder, deaf at eight, instrumental 1909 founding of the Virginia School for the colored, deaf and blind children in Hampton, Newport News. Thirty-year superintendent. His wife was the first teacher. Note, this was for the Commonwealth of Virginia. This man, during Jim Crow times, when it was just as dangerous for faces like mine, it was even so for his, for a white gentleman to stand up for blacks, that was death threats and everything else, but still he stood, he stood for education, and that's why that school and he are deserving of representation and placement in Hampton History Museum, which will be done. I wrote the letter to Council, and I will read it: Prompt, prominent, permanent placement recognition of the Hampton City Museum, not just black history, equal history, City of Hampton, Commonwealth of Virginia, education is an equal right for all people. The Phenix Commerce Center and our greater Wythe community still represents a tragic obliteration of our City of Hampton and Commonwealth of Virginia, iconic, beloved and historical special education campus, Virginia State School. The greater Wythe - avoidable, painful and shameful, tragic obliteration which the City of Hampton could and should have prevented. Cultural, educational, historical significance were decimated for City greed, unsubstantiated, undeniable

educational buildings in our greater Wythe area, the schools, Greenbrier, Phenix and Virginia School have all been torn down, yet parallel to us, you look at Old Wythe, which is a historically white neighborhood - you still see Wythe Elementary that stands, which is a great disservice to our community and theirs, so I will follow up. I had emails - abandoned schools. I also had the history of the school. I say that to say we can go on, but you never forget your history, because it can come again. Thank you.

Mayor Gray noted that Ms. Weaver was the last person to speak and then called on the Clerk to read the required appointments.

## GENERAL ITEMS

### Appointments

4. [24-0396](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Hampton Animal Response Team Advisory Committee (HARTAC)

A motion was made by Councilmember Michelle Ferebee and seconded by Vice Mayor Steven Brown, to appoint Jeannie Belgrave and Phillip Siff to fill the unexpired portion of terms which expire on February 28, 2027, and Melanie Paul to fill the unexpired portion of a term ending on June 30, 2025.

**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

For the benefit of the public, Ms. Bunting shared that Hampton made a pitch for Something in the Water to take place at Fort Monroe the last time it fell through with Virginia Beach, however, there seems to be an attachment to Virginia Beach because Pharrell Williams grew up there. She noted that our entire area was disappointed about the cancelation and staff is willing to re-pitch the proposal.

With regard to the budget, Ms. Bunting said that we are entering into our budget season and there will be plenty of opportunities for the public to provide in-person and online input about what they value and would like to see supported in the budget. The locations for those sessions are being finalized and will be announced at the next meeting and are expected to be held around the third week of March. She

added that since it will be later in the year, the hope is that some of the issues with the state budget may be resolved and there will be more clarity about what we are working with; otherwise, staff may need to do two budget developments (best- and worst-case scenarios).

Lastly, Ms. Bunting said that we look forward to the celebration Ms. Weaver mentioned. She also spoke about the stakeholder engagement group involved with things related to the former Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind and shared that the group gave an outstanding report at today's afternoon session about their short-term, mid-term and long-term priorities which, too, will be worked into our budget process.

### **MISCELLANEOUS NEW BUSINESS**

There were no items of new business.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

### **Contact Info:**

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

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Donnie R. Tuck  
Mayor

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Katherine K. Glass, MMC  
Clerk of Council

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