



City of Hampton

22 Lincoln Street
Hampton, VA 23669
www.hampton.gov

Council Approved Minutes - Final City Council Work Session

Mayor Donnie R. Tuck
Vice Mayor Jimmy Gray
Councilmember Chris L. Bowman
Councilmember Eleanor Weston Brown
Councilmember Steven L. Brown
Councilmember Billy Hobbs
Councilmember Chris Snead

STAFF: Mary Bunting, City Manager
Cheran Cordell Ivery, City Attorney
Katherine K. Glass, Clerk of Council

Wednesday, October 28, 2020

1:00 PM

Council Chambers, 8th
Floor, City Hall

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Tuck called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. with all of the City Council members present.

Present 7 - Councilmember Chris L. Bowman, Councilmember Eleanor Weston Brown, Councilmember Steven L. Brown, Vice Mayor Jimmy Gray, Councilmember Billy Hobbs, Councilmember Chris Snead, and Mayor Donnie R. Tuck

DONNIE R. TUCK PRESIDED

AGENDA

1. [20-0310](#) Update on Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) Transit Strategic Plan

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

City Manager Mary Bunting introduced the item.

President and CEO of Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) William Harrell greeted those on the dais and gave opening remarks. He announced that 15 minute routes will soon come to the peninsula creating a more viable system. He also said that HRT is pleased with the support from Hampton Mayor Donnie Tuck and Portsmouth Mayor John Rowe who led the Regional Advisory Committee of business leaders in identifying that there was substantial underinvestment in public transportation. Their efforts helped obtain legislation that will put together a core network of 15 minute service routes in all cities of the 757 area.

Mr. Harrell said that the goal of the program is to provide a core network of transit services across the Hampton Roads region. This is based on the Code of Virginia and the Transit Strategic Plan (TSP) which was approved by the HRT Board in June. This document is what HRT will build upon to continue its work.

Mr. Harrell thanked Chairman of the HRT Board, Vice Mayor Gray; Assistant City Manager Brian DeProfio; and other staff for their work to get this system in place.

Mr. Harrell also spoke about funding sources for the program and said that 45% of HRT's operating budget is supported by member cities. He explained that having regional dedicated funds allows HRT to have a stable funding source to support the 15 minute routes. Funding sources for the Regional Transit Program include: the state recordation tax, the regional transportation improvement fee (grantor's tax), and the transient occupancy tax (TOT). Mr. Harrell concluded his comments saying that HRT is excited for these and other upcoming changes as they will help accomplish what the program is about - treating people with dignity.

HRT's Chief Planning and Development Officer Mr. Ray Amoruso greeted those on the dais and provided an overview of what was presented during HRT's last presentation about the regional core network of routes.

Mr. Amoruso reviewed the next few slides of the presentation which provide information about new regional core routes; regional backbone routes; and limited/express routes (max routes in various cities in the region and Peninsula commuter routes). He also reviewed a slide which breaks down groupings of routes and improvements, and enhancements and amenities which support those routes.

Mr. Amoruso explained what eligible expenditures are within the 757 Express Program. Program eligible costs include: capital and operating and maintenance costs; expansion projects; and state of good repair costs (costs to maintain assets long-term).

Mr. Amoruso began speaking about the capital elements of the program including rolling stock, facilities, and technology.

Mayor Tuck asked whether part of the plan will be to consider utilizing a combination of diesel and electric buses or whichever is less expensive.

Mr. Amoruso said a one-year pilot program utilizing six electric buses will help ascertain the buses' capability and performance. Following this pilot program, the intent is to make additional investments including a group of low-sulfur burning diesel buses. The long-term plan will incorporate a combination of that and electric buses.

Mayor Tuck asked if some buses run on propane and others run on natural gas.

Mr. Amoruso replied yes (compressed natural gas); however, there is no facility to accommodate that and meet Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) safety requirements related to compressed natural gas. He noted that the industry appears to be moving toward the use of all electric buses.

Councilman Brown asked whether electric buses are cleaner with respect to emissions and exhaust fumes and whether they have the ability to handle routes.

Mr. Amoruso explained that electric buses have zero emissions because there is no diesel engine or use of fuel. Vehicles are charged with a battery and put through a cleaning process prior to service the next day. With regard to handling the routes, Mr. Amoruso explained that these buses are expected to hold a charge for the entire day with any type of passenger load. He added that the longest route in the system will be used in the pilot program and this should reveal the capability of the bus.

In response to Councilman Brown's question about auxiliary batteries, Mr. Amoruso explained that opportunity charging stations are placed in routes in the event of a low battery charge.

Mr. Amoruso continued speaking about the capital elements of the program. He also spoke about the operations and maintenance elements of the program including rolling stock, facilities, technology and human resources (personnel to help run the system).

Mr. Amoruso paused to speak about current financial uncertainty, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. He shared that there is the potential for taxes and the real estate market to affect the program's flexibility; however, this program is scalable, and, therefore, some amenities can be delayed until the economy changes.

Mr. Amoruso reviewed the next several slides of the presentation which provide images of what the program will be investing in including facilities, passenger amenities, trolley base, HRT's new Bus Operating and Maintenance Division facility on the south side, and passenger transfer facilities.

Mr. Amoruso paused to emphasize that the program will also invest in human resource needs as the success of the program is in the people.

Mayor Tuck asked about the success of HRT's operator training program in conjunction with Hampton's WorkOne Center and whether HRT will be doing similar

workforce development projects in other communities.

Mr. Amoruso stated that HRT has been successful in partnering with the cities of Hampton, Newport News and Norfolk on workforce development and is in the process of working with additional localities.

Ms. Bunting noted that Hampton is interested in continuing its work with HRT to hire more individuals in addition to the five that have already been successful in the program.

Councilwoman Brown said that we are excited about our academies of Hampton and growing a workforce in Hampton. She suggested that this may be an opportunity to partner with Hampton City Schools for growing the workforce from the ground up.

Ms. Bunting commented that Councilwoman Brown's suggestion may fit nicely with the Transportation Logistics Academy and that she would reach out to Hampton City Schools Superintendent Dr. Jeffrey Smith about the idea.

Mr. Amoruso continued the presentation and reviewed the General Investment Schedule. This schedule shows the plan for investment in various categories over the next 10 years. The categories include: facilities, passenger amenities, technology equipment, rolling stock, service implementation, and ongoing operations and maintenance. He added that Regional Transit System funds will be matched by state and local funds and some capital programs and operating costs. HRT's intent is to place the first order of buses after the holidays and begin group-based service implementation in FY23 (calendar year 2022). Mr. Amoruso noted that this schedule also depends on the number of operators hired and working at that time.

Councilman Brown asked about the cost of an electric bus and the cost of an all-in shelter.

Mr. Amoruso said the cost of an electric bus varies depending on the manufacturer; a Proterra electric bus costs approximately \$990,000 (a good deal); HRT has obtained buses through two discretionary grants. With regard to the cost of an all-in shelter, Mr. Amoruso said an all-in shelter costs approximately \$12,000.

Councilman Brown asked what additional costs would be incurred by localities, such as Hampton, to obtain electric buses and shelters.

Mr. Amoruso stated that localities will incur no additional costs under this program. He explained that this is a cost neutral plan and the investment is being supported by the money HRT will receive. He continued explaining that a new facility will be

needed on the north side if we convert to an all-electric fleet, which will become the underlying cost of the agency.

Mr. Harrell gave closing remarks, thanked Council for the opportunity to share this information, and opened the floor for questions from those on the dais.

Councilman Bowman commended the HRT team on the excellent presentation and said that he was excited about the electric bus pilot program and the consideration for using natural gas. He asked if there is a plan related to disposal of the batteries as these batteries may be toxic or hazardous.

Mr. Harrell said HRT elected to do the pilot project to address these types of issues and to ensure that it will be a cost-effective endeavor; however, he would consult with the operational team for additional information about the plan for battery disposal.

Vice Mayor Gray asked Mr. Amoruso to speak about the mobile ticketing pilot project that was implemented during the Something in the Water Festival in Virginia Beach.

Mr. Amoruso explained that at last year's Something in the Water Festival, HRT implemented a pilot project where oceanfront trolleys traveled up and down Atlantic and Pacific Avenues. HRT gauged the success of mobile ticketing; learned a lot from the experience; is working with the manufacturer; and is near the point to where the program will be rolled out system-wide. Mr. Amoruso added that the technology conversion of the fare boxes for payment is underway, and HRT is confident that this will be rolled out successfully by this summer.

Vice Mayor Gray commented about the benefit of localities investing in regional routes and the enhancement on improvement in service long-term. He also said that he believes that transit service and work commutes will improve once the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel project is complete.

Mayor Tuck commended the HRT team and expressed his excitement about this legislation which will allow HRT to have funding to enhance the system making it a more cohesive regional system versus seven independent systems.

2. [20-0311](#) Briefing on Hampton Roads Transit Bus Stop Improvements

Attachments: [Presentation](#)
[Presentation - Updated 10/26/2020](#)

Ms. Bunting said, as Mr. Harrell and Mr. Amoruso noted in the previous presentation, there is money for new amenities at bus stops in our City; therefore,

staff is prepared to show Council where these amenities may show up in the City.

Public Works Director Jason Mitchell introduced Hampton's newest Virginia Department of Transportation Program Manager Lynne Keenan to make the presentation.

Ms. Keenan greeted those on the dais and announced that the City is excited to partner with Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) to implement installing improvements at bus stops in Hampton during FY21 and in the future. She explained that the goal is to install amenities such as shelters, benches, trash cans and solar lights at 40 locations in the City. She added that a data driven approach was taken in which the number of riders, volume of routes, the regional backbone and commuter routes were taken into consideration. She then shared a bit of information about the amenities at the 412 bus stops in Hampton and reiterated that the goal is to prioritize high volume stops and the regional backbones as the project moves forward.

Ms. Keenan defined high-volume bus stops as stops which have at least 25 boarding's per day. She also provided information about existing amenities at the 24 high-volume bus stops; needed improvements; and backbone/commuter routes in the City. She added that staff worked with HRT to identify high-volume routes as well as those within the Regional Transit System (RTS).

Ms. Keenan reviewed the next few slides of the presentation which show the proposed locations for shelter and bench improvements.

Councilman Brown asked Ms. Keenan to speak about how the sites scheduled to receive shelters were selected.

Ms. Keenan said that decision was based on highest volume or the regional backbone. She explained that areas which had ample space for a shelter were considered for a shelter; whereas, locations with smaller spaces or which would require an easement were selected for bench improvements.

Ms. Keenan reviewed the next slide of the presentation which summarizes staffs findings regarding the number of shelters, benches and potential bus stops which need to be relocated.

Ms. Keenan reviewed the final slide of the presentation which provides information about potential FY21 improvements and additional improvements over the next 5 years. Potential improvements in the future include shelters, benches, and solar lights.

Vice Mayor Gray said that two of four shelters have been installed in the King Street area and asked about the status of the others which may be on hold because they require easements.

Ms. Keenan said that she did not have a specific completion time frame for the other projects; however, those projects are in the works and staff will follow up with Council with more information.

Don Lynch of HRT's Facilities and Engineering Department said that a shelter was recently installed in the Langley/King Street area; and that a shelter for the location at King Street and Rip Rap Road is in possession; however, that project is pending the finalization of the easement to begin site improvement work. Mr. Lynch noted that HRT is working with City staff on identifying what amenities can be added to those locations.

Ms. Keenan opened the floor for additional questions from those on the dais.

Councilman Bowman thanked Ms. Keenan for the excellent presentation; said that he was excited for these improvements as they have been needed for many years; and complimented staff on the progressive solar light improvements as this is being used at a facility near the Y.H. Thomas Community Center and it is wonderful.

Ms. Keenan gave credit to HRT for the work on the solar lighting improvements.

In response to Mayor Tuck, Ms. Keenan and Mr. Lynch confirmed that solar lighting will be installed by HRT, not the City.

Mayor Tuck said that these projects have been in the works for a while and everyone is happy that they will now become a reality.

3. [20-0283](#) Boards and Commissions Commitment to Excellence

Attachments: [Commitment to Excellence - DRAFT Presentation](#)

Ms. Bunting introduced the item.

Clerk of Council Katherine Glass greeted those on the dais and emphasized the importance of citizen participation on Boards, Commissions and Committees as this work is instrumental in improving and advancing the City.

Ms. Glass paused to share a bit about her own past experience while serving on the Solid Waste Advisory Commission and the Planning Commission.

Ms. Glass announced that she, the City Manager and the City Attorney have developed a tool called the City of Hampton Boards, Commissions and Committees Commitment to Excellence which they believe will give citizen appointees a stronger starting point as they begin their board service. This tool will also serve as a guiding document for those who are already serving as board members.

Ms. Glass said that Council has been provided with the draft document and today she will provide an overview of the document for the benefit of our citizens and those who may be watching from home.

Ms. Glass read a portion of the City's strategic vision: "We are Hampton, a vibrant waterfront community celebrating and embracing more than 400 years of history and innovation to create an even more dynamic future".

Ms. Glass said that she took the liberty of adding the following portion to the City's strategic vision as it relates to citizen appointees' board participation: "and the citizens who join us in service to our City through service on Boards, Commissions and Committees demonstrate their commitment to excellence".

Ms. Glass explained that while specific orientations take place for members who are appointed to boards, there is no general information for all members regardless of which board they serve on; and, therefore, the idea arose to provide Council appointees with consistent information and guidance as they begin their service. The proposed document is the result of collaborative work between the City Manager, City Attorney and Clerk of Council. Today, staff is seeking Council's approval to move forward and determine the next steps in the process.

Ms. Glass reviewed the components of each section of the draft document. The sections include: the Code of Ethics; the Scope of Duties; the Standards of Conduct; the Best Practices for Communication; and Commitment.

Mayor Tuck referenced a portion of the Standards of Conduct section regarding tax obligations and asked how staff will be knowledgeable about whether appointees remain current on their tax obligations.

Ms. Glass referred to the City Manager or City Attorney for a response.

City Attorney Cheran Ivery clarified that that topic falls under guidance and best practices. She added that it is unlikely that an appointee's tax obligations will be checked; however, it is our hope that appointees will adhere to this practice and stay up to date on their tax obligations.

Councilman Brown asked if there is a social media policy in place for Boards and Commissions.

City Attorney Ivery said there is no formal social media policy in place, however, guidance regarding use of social media will be encompassed in this document.

Ms. Glass added that one of the next steps will be to prepare an expanded training guide which will include guidance about social media. That information should be available around the January 2021 timeframe as long as everything remains on schedule.

Ms. Glass concluded the presentation and shared the next steps in the process which are: to obtain Council's approval of the draft document; incorporate any changes that Council may wish to see in the document; and include this item on Council's November 12th agenda for adoption.

Ms. Glass added that once the above next steps have taken place, staff will be in the position to begin training in January 2021; will provide training opportunities for current appointees via zoom meetings; and will develop ongoing group trainings for new appointees.

Ms. Glass opened the floor for questions and comments from those on the dais.

Councilman Bowman commended Ms. Glass on the presentation.

REGIONAL ISSUES

There were no regional issues.

NEW BUSINESS

There were no items of new business.

Mayor Tuck shared that a groundbreaking ceremony for the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel expansion is scheduled for tomorrow and the Governor will attend. The event is limited to 50 people to allow for social distancing and represents a significant event in our city's history.

CLOSED SESSION

4. [20-0312](#) Closed session pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711.A.1,

.3, .6, .7 and .8 to discuss appointments as listed on the agenda; to discuss or consider the disposition of publicly held real property in the areas of Pembroke Avenue and the Magruder Corridor, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the city; to discuss or consider the investment of public funds in the Coliseum District and Shell Road Corridor where competition or bargaining is involved, where, if made public initially, the financial interest of the city would be adversely affected; to consult with legal counsel in the matter of Ross A. Mugler, Commissioner of the Revenue for the City of Hampton v. Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless, where such briefing in an open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the city ; and to consult with legal counsel employed by the city regarding specific legal matters concerning, development agreements, real property rights and substandard lot zoning regulations that require the provision of legal advice by such counsel.

At 1:59 p.m., a motion was made by Councilmember Billy Hobbs and seconded by Councilmember Steven Brown, that this Closed Session - Motion be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Councilmember Bowman, Councilmember Weston Brown, Councilmember Brown, Vice Mayor Gray, Councilmember Hobbs, Councilmember Snead and Mayor Tuck

CERTIFICATION

5. [20-0316](#) Resolution Certifying Closed Session

At 5:11 p.m., a motion was made by Councilmember Hobbs and seconded by Councilmember Snead, that this Closed Session - Certification be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Councilmember Bowman, Councilmember Weston Brown, Councilmember Brown, Vice Mayor Gray, Councilmember Hobbs, Councilmember Snead and Mayor Tuck

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:11 p.m.

Contact Info:

Clerk of Council, 757-727-6315, council@hampton.gov

Donnie R. Tuck
Mayor

Katherine K. Glass, CMC
Clerk of Council

Date approved by Council _____