



City of Hampton

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

Council Approved Minutes - Final City Council Work 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

Wednesday, October 8, 2025

1:00 PM

Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Gray called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. All members of the City Council were present except for Vice Mayor Brown. Mayor Gray shared that Vice Mayor Brown had a speaking engagement and would join the meeting after.

Present 6 - Councilmember Randy C. Bowman Sr., Councilmember Carolyn S. Campbell, Councilmember Michelle T. Ferebee, Councilmember Hope L. Harper, Councilmember Martha Mugler, and Mayor Jimmy Gray

Excused 1 - Vice Mayor Steven L. Brown

JIMMY GRAY PRESIDED

AGENDA

1. [25-0274](#) Public Art Program Briefing

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

City Manager Mary Bunting welcomed Dr. Karen Ward, Chair of the Hampton Commission on the Arts, and other members of the Commission who were in attendance. She also acknowledged those on the subcommittee who worked diligently on the Public Art Program guidelines.

Ms. Bunting shared a bit about her and Councilwoman Mugler's trip to Austin where they learned about the great impact that public art has had on the esthetics of the community there.

Dr. Ward greeted those on the dais and recognized the Commissioners and members of the subcommittee who were in attendance by having them stand. She also introduced Attorney Tiki Wallace, who assisted with the presentation.

Dr. Ward began the presentation by sharing the objective of the Public Art Program which is to cultivate a fun, vibrant and creative community by supporting and expanding the creation of public art throughout the City. She also spoke about funding for the project and what City Council would like to see materialized, such as the use of statement pieces, the location in an Arts District (Downtown, Phoebus) and that the work begin before winter, if possible.

Dr. Ward presented information about the subcommittee's tasks which were to determine the components of the theme, explore potential locations for the art and develop guidelines for Request for Proposals (RFP's). In summary, the subcommittee's proposed theme is "From the Sea to the Stars: Past, Present, Possible"; selected proposed locations are the Settlers Landing Road Parking Garage and Queens Way; and RFP guidelines include that an RFP is required for projects over \$30,000, that the process remains consistent with the Commission on the Arts process, and that the scope of the RFP includes specific criteria, such as location, cost and size.

Dr. Ward briefly spoke about marketing efforts for the project and the individuals who will be a part of the public art selection panel.

A brief discussion took place following the presentation. Topics of discussion included funding for long-term maintenance; permanency and maintenance of novel pieces of art; opportunities for the general public to participate and contribute to the project; potential for the use of nonprofit organizations and less rigid application processes (versus the RFP process); plans for expanding to other areas in the City after concluding the work at the initial site in downtown Hampton; and the great work of the subcommittee in putting a solid plan together for the process.

Mayor Gray thanked everyone for their leadership and hard work on this project. He also made remarks about public art being a large part of Hampton's future and then applauded the committee for moving things forward prior to the winter.

2. [25-0270](#) Briefing on Proposed Infill Housing Design Standards and Plan Book

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

Ms. Bunting introduced the item and introduced Work Program Architects'(WPA)

Director of Community Engagement, Sharon Manana, and Architectural Designer, E. Rae LeClair, to give an update on the Hampton Infill Housing Plan Book.

Ms. Manana and Ms. LeClair alternated speaking during the presentation.

The first portion of the presentation included background information about WPA, the definition of an infill home (a new home on an old lot) and the purpose of an infill housing plan book. In summary, an infill housing plan book provides a variety of infill housing plans that have been approved by the City. It also incentivizes builders to construct pre-approved infill homes that maintain the character of existing neighborhoods.

The presenters shared a success story of the Olde Huntersville Neighborhood in Norfolk, Virginia, where more than 90 new homes have been built since the release of the plan book in 2017.

The next portion of the presentation included the preliminary findings and data analysis from the study that was done of the Buckroe, Phoebus, Downtown Hampton and Olde Wythe neighborhoods. Findings were related to neighborhood styles, such as Dutch and cottage styles, and specific home features, such as the façade, lot size and type of roof.

Next, the presenters summarized the report on the community engagement initiative. Means of community outreach included community meetings, a building professional meeting and an online survey. Feedback was received on a number of topics, some of which include parking, façades, floor plans, building materials and first floor accessibility. In addition, concerns were raised about the sizes of homes, front doors not facing the street, houses in close proximity to each other and one-story options for multi-generational use. Other feedback received was about community preferences in various areas and the desire for a mix of modern styles with traditional elements. The report also contained feedback from online surveyors and a summary of discussion from the building professionals meeting.

Information was also provided about another case study that was done in the Locust Avenue, Wythe area of the City.

Lastly, the presenters announced the timeline of the next steps in the process which will begin with the formation of the schematic design documents in December leading up to permitting and launch of the plan book in the summer of 2026.

Mayor Gray opened the floor for questions, but none were posed. He then thanked Ms. Manana and Ms. LeClair for the great presentation and said that we all look

forward to moving forward with this initiative leading up to the completion of the plan book.

For the benefit of the public, Ms. Bunting announced that there is action on the consent agenda this evening requesting that Council initiate the next steps outlined in today's presentation.

Vice Mayor Brown arrived at 1:34 p.m.

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

3. [25-0284](#) 2026 General Assembly Legislative Priorities

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

Ms. Bunting introduced the item and introduced the Vice President of Two Capitols Consulting, Ed Reed, to make the presentation. She encouraged Council to participate in the conversation and inform Mr. Reed of any additional items for consideration, as there will be ample time to make changes.

Mr. Reed greeted everyone and shared that he will present the draft legislative agenda for the upcoming session and discuss expectations of timelines, proposed policy positions, legislative requests, and budget requests and then seek feedback from Council.

Mr. Reed shared the timeline of events beginning with this afternoon's presentation of the draft legislative agenda, leading up to the General Assembly session which will begin at noon January 14, 2026. He noted that there will be a lot of requests in the upcoming session and that things will be tight in terms of the budget as we work through the 60-day process.

Mr. Reed presented information on policy positions that have historically been included in the package. He explained that policy positions are typically broader issues and there is latitude to support or oppose the bill, if one is introduced. The policy positions that Mr. Reed spoke of fall under the following categories: Resiliency, environment and natural resources; community development and economic development; public education; fiscal responsibility; public safety; FOIA and COIA (Freedom of Information Act and Conflict of Interest Act); and

transportation and transit.

Next, Mr. Reed covered legislative and budget requests that are specific requests on behalf of the City of Hampton. He noted that many of these requests will most likely be one-time funding requests, with a few being recurring expenses. Budget requests include restoration of the Hampton Health District, Safer Communities Grant Program, and Fort Wool restoration efforts. Legislative requests include requests related to the steam plant and vacant commercial building taxation.

Mr. Reed shared a list of our regional and community partners that we typically align with on legislative priorities and then opened the floor for feedback and questions.

Mr. Reed provided the following information in response to questions posed by Council: Some legislators outside of Hampton's delegation have had conversations about parking minimums for developers, therefore, this topic will be on the radar. Every few years, the Commonwealth updates barrier crime laws to ensure that relevant safety requirements are in place, and a request has been made to give localities flexibility with regard to violence interrupters. Currently, there is nothing indicating that other localities will introduce legislation to reduce the number of cats in their communities. The Department of Conservation and Recreation oversees funding for Fort Wool restoration and there may be some tweaking to the amount funded for that project.

Discussion took place among the members of Council, City Manager Mary Bunting, City Attorney Courtney Sydnor and Mr. Reed with regard to the following topics: Public safety at vape stores and the ability to limit the number of vape stores in our community; keeping speed camera funds local; conversations that are taking place about airport competitiveness, international air travel, and the future of aviation; proposals to address funding support for localities that are losing revenue or having other negative impacts as a result of the veteran tax exemption and the telecommunications tax; legislation to increase the sales tax dedicated for major road projects in the region, including projects on secondary roads; legislation and/or the City's position regarding the management of cat colonies and TNR (trap, neuter and release); and legislation regarding flock camera usage.

4. [25-0271](#) Strategic Priority Update: Living With Water

Attachments: [Presentation](#)
[Handout](#)

Ms. Bunting introduced the item and introduced Coastal Resilience Engineer Scott Smith. Resiliency Specialist Olivia Askew was also in attendance.

Mr. Smith greeted everyone and stated that this presentation is about how we are addressing coastal resiliency, recurring flooding and environmental sustainability, while enhancing our tax base and quality of life.

Mr. Smith shared the Resilience Division's mission and guiding principles which are reflected in their projects. He also announced that this values-driven initiative grew out of the City Council strategic priority, Living with Water, and has been broken down into two contexts, addressing the challenges of flooding and treating water as an asset.

The next portion of the presentation listed the department's FY25 accomplishments, including projects and studies that were managed. Some of the projects and studies that were highlighted include the Lake Hampton Resilience Park, the Aberdeen Gardens Community Resilience Implementation Strategy, the Bluebird Gap Farm Living Shoreline, the Big Bethel Blueway, the Aberdeen Gardens Drainage Study, the Natural Infrastructure Resilience Plan, and the Billy Woods Canal Feasibility Study.

Mr. Smith spoke about grants that fund some of these projects and the professional awards the City has received which reflect the innovation and leadership of Hampton's resilience program. He then elaborated on a number of other projects throughout the City, some of which were developed as a result of the aforementioned studies. These projects will reduce flood risk, restore shorelines, improve public spaces and deliver visible benefits to neighborhoods.

Mr. Smith emphasized the importance of staff educating and engaging with the community, particularly during the study and project development phases of these projects. This includes working with civic and nonprofit organizations and educational institutions to help make things understandable and accessible to citizens.

Vice Mayor Brown and Mr. Smith had a brief discussion about the plan for the Resilience Park which will be a monument in honor of police officers and firefighters.

Mr. Smith concluded the presentation speaking about why this work is so important. In summary, it protects residents, the economy and infrastructure; leverages outside resources; layers public benefits; positions Hampton as a national leader in resilience and sustainability; and is a foundation of the City's future.

Mayor Gray thanked Mr. Smith for the presentation and encouraged the department

to keep up the good work. He then opened the floor for questions, but none were posed.

REGIONAL ISSUES

There were no regional reports.

NEW BUSINESS

There were no items of new business.

CLOSED SESSION

5. [25-0282](#) Closed session pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711.A (.1) to discuss appointments as listed on the agenda, to discuss the performance of appointees to a local board or commission and possible termination of same and to discuss the performance of the Clerk of Council; (.3) to discuss the possible disposition of publicly held real property in the areas of Phoebus and Hampton Roads Center Parkway, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the city; and (.7) and (.8) for consultation with legal counsel regarding (i) assessment of pending litigation, where such consultation in public would adversely affect the negotiating or litigation posture of the city, and (ii) counsel's legal analysis and advice concerning specific transactions and other legal issues pertaining to the city.

At 2:45 p.m., a motion was made by Councilmember Martha Mugler and seconded by Vice Mayor Steven Brown, that this Closed Session - Motion be approved. Mayor Gray indicated that the closed session would take place in the Lawson Conference Room beginning at 3 p.m. 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

6. [25-0279](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Neighborhood Commission

7. [25-0280](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
8. [25-0281](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Citizens' Unity Commission
9. [25-0283](#) Consideration of an Appointment to the Citizens' Engagement Advisory Review Commission (CEARC)
10. [25-0286](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Hampton Youth Commission

CERTIFICATION

11. [25-0264](#) Resolution Certifying Closed Session
At 2:45 p.m., a motion was made by Councilmember Martha Mugler seconded by Vice Mayor Steven Brown, that this Closed Session - Certification be approved. 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

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Contact Info:

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

Jimmy Gray
Mayor

Katherine K. Glass, MMC
Clerk of Council

Date approved by Council _____