



# City of Hampton

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

## Council Approved Minutes - Final City Council Work Session

*Mayor Donnie R. Tuck*  
*Vice Mayor Jimmy Gray*  
*Councilmember Chris L. Bowman*  
*Councilmember Steven L. Brown*  
*Councilmember Hope L. Harper*  
*Councilmember Billy Hobbs*  
*Councilmember Martha Mugler*

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

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**Wednesday, November 8, 2023**

**1:00 PM**

**Council Chambers**

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### CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Tuck called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. All members of the City Council were present. Mayor Tuck shared that the City Manager, Mary Bunting, was not present and was on an international trip which was paid for by the organization engaging her. Brian DeProffio, Assistant City Manager, was sitting in for her.

**Present** 7 - Councilmember Chris L. Bowman, Councilmember Steven L. Brown, Vice Mayor Jimmy Gray, Councilmember Hope L. Harper, Councilmember Billy Hobbs, Councilmember Martha Mugler, and Mayor Donnie R. Tuck

### DONNIE R. TUCK PRESIDED

### AGENDA

1. [23-0328](#) Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion FY2023 Annual Report and Departmental Overview

**Attachments:** [2023 Annual Report](#)  
[Animated Presentation](#)  
[Presentation](#)

Assistant City Manager Brian DeProffio introduced the item and introduced the Director of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), Gabe Diaz, to review the annual report and the activities the office has been engaged in over the past year.

Mr. Diaz greeted those on the dais and thanked them for the opportunity to speak. He noted that he also serves as the LGBTQ liaison to the Office of DEI and then briefly spoke about the inception of the office dating back to 1995.

Mr. Diaz highlighted the previous directors including Harry Quiett, John Johnson, Michelle Woods-Jones, Synethia Newby and Latiesha Handie.

Mayor Tuck asked who the director was prior to 1998. Mr. Diaz clarified that the office had a program and a coordinating office dating back to 1995, but there was no assigned executive director at that time.

Mr. Diaz shared a quote from a magazine article that was adopted by former director Latiesha Handie: "The position of standing together to restore unity is our most actionable and familiar course." Mr. Diaz stated that this quote speaks to the work of the department and then shared the office's mission, vision, and values. Its mission is to promote the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion through programs and events that create and increase opportunities for communities to learn and grow together. Its vision is that Hampton will be a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive City of all citizens concerning race, color, religion, age, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity. In addition, the Office of DEI stands by the following values: diversity, equity, inclusion, cultural competency and unity.

The next slide of the presentation included a photo from one of Mr. Diaz's first readings at the Mayor's Book Club with the following excerpt from the Executive Management Team's Collective Impact Statement: The City of Hampton will explore different perspectives and unique experiences in order to increase empathy, adaptability and respect for one another within our workforce. This will extend to our interactions with the public as we are leaders in developing a culturally competent community.

The next section of the presentation provided information from the office's annual report. In summary, the office has 27 appointed commissioners; a Municipal Equality Index score of 77 (which is projected to increase by 20 points); 81 Hampton Diversity College graduates; and has engaged in 123 community events and programs.

Mr. Diaz spoke about the five commitments the office adopted from the ONE Virginia Plan and the work it does to fulfill these commitments. The commitments are related to climate and relations; access and success; training and education; community engagement; and infrastructure.

**CLIMATE AND RELATIONS:**

This commitment is to create and sustain an organizational environment that affirms and respects our diversity, equity, and inclusion and employee inclusive practices. Employee inclusivity is not only morally right, but is also beneficial for community connections and promotes fairness, creativity, better decision-making, talent attraction and overall success (both internally and in the community).

This portion of the presentation also described the office's involvement with the 2040 Hampton Community Plan and provided examples of the communications and reflective government work it does in the City.

**ACCESS AND SUCCESS:**

This commitment involves providing equitable tools and support for employees, residents and stakeholders, allowing them to reach their potential in the City.

This portion of the presentation included a description of and photos from the Community Equity Opportunities Fest which connected residents to available resources that contribute to the quality of life. This portion also included information about an outreach strategy called community canvassing. This strategy involves engaging and empowering different communities to reach their full potential.

**TRAINING AND EDUCATION:**

This commitment is to engage employees and citizens in developmental learning of varied perspectives of diversity, equity and inclusion.

This portion of the presentation included information about educational opportunities offered to City employees and citizens. Some of these opportunities include the Hampton Diversity College (free and open to citizens); Hampton Diversity Training (workforce diversity training); City departmental team building and retreats; Boy Scouts of America merit badge training; TEEN C.E.R.T. (Community Emergency Response Team) training; and the GET S.E.T. (Supervisor Effective Training) Program.

The final slide in this section of the presentation included a photo of some of Hampton's City leaders who were invited to participate in a week-long cohort in Cambridge, Massachusetts, hosted by the Bloomberg Center for Cities at Harvard University. Hampton's proven efforts were put on display on an international level and many people were impressed with Hampton's community budget process, community plan, and 311 call center structure.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

This commitment involves deepening the agencies contribution to improved inclusivity and equity in the communities we serve.

Mr. Diaz emphasized that Hampton has proven data to show that our effective community engagement results in positive outcomes such as increased trust with citizens; informed decision-making; strengthened social cohesion; tailored solutions; and long-term sustainability.

Mr. Diaz spoke about examples of how the City engages with the community and some of the events that have taken place in Hampton. Events include, but are not limited to, a project recently done in connection with the regional division of the Buffalo Soldiers Motorcycle Club; the Hampton Mosaic Festival; the Phabulous Phoebus Street Festival; and the Mystical Arts of Tibet. Mr. Diaz encouraged City staff and those in the community to continue to participate in these wonderful events.

**INFRASTRUCTURE:**

This commitment is to create and sustain citywide systems and processes to effectively support progress in achieving diversity goals.

Mr. Diaz spoke about building inclusive foundations. He shared that our executive management leadership team is committed to a review of our systems and processes to identify and eliminate barriers or obstacles to achieve our common goal of unity and high performance. He announced that Hampton's diversity, equity and inclusion commitment is shared during the hiring and onboarding process. Hampton has also established the LGBTQ liaison to address and respond to community-specific concerns in a municipal index and quality scorecard. In addition, the department head has committed to an internal review of our processes, language and trainings so that we understand that structure, equity and cultivating diversity is our organizational commitment.

Mr. Diaz spoke a bit about the LGBTQ liaison and the Human Rights Campaign. This organization's mission is to improve the lives of LGBTQ people by working to increase understanding and encourage the adaptation of LGBTQ-inclusive practices in local municipalities. He shared that in 2014, Hampton scored a zero on the municipal index equality score card, but currently has a score of 77, with a projected score of 100.

Mr. Diaz spoke about why this work is so important. He explained that diversity

drives progress which is the infrastructure for success. The Office of DEI implements these commitments to achieve high performance while maintaining inclusivity and representation; equity and fairness; economic growth; social cohesion; talent attraction and retention; reputation and branding; legal and ethical considerations; long-term resilience; cultural enrichment; and global perspective.

Mr. Diaz read the following quote by Juan Felipe Herrera: "Diversity really means becoming complete as human beings - all of us. We learn from each other. If you're missing on that stage, we learn less. We all need to be on that stage." Mr. Diaz noted that this quote resonated with him when speaking of Hampton and making sure that all residents feel welcomed, supported and included.

Mr. Diaz showed a few additional slides with photos of individuals from DEI programs, outreach and engagement in Hampton and then emphasized that we love the water, our beaches and other wonderful assets in Hampton, but our greatest asset is the people of Hampton.

Mr. Diaz recognized other departments and groups that contribute to the work of the Office of DEI, some of which include: The Citizens' Unity Commission (which meets on the second Thursday of the month during the months of September through June); the Citizens' Engagement Advisory and Review Commission (which meets on the third Tuesday of the month during September through June); and the Youth Advisory Group (which meets every fourth Monday of the month during the months of September through June).

The final slide of the presentation provided contact information for the Office of DEI, Mr. Diaz, and Program Coordinator Mariah Roederer.

Mr. Diaz also recognized Hampton's Marketing and Outreach Department; Parks, Recreation and Leisure Services; the Community Development Department; the Office of Youth Opportunities; Mr. Ryan Taylor; and the Office of DEI staff for providing the photos that were included in the slide presentation.

Mr. Diaz opened the floor for questions and discussion.

Mayor Tuck thanked Mr. Diaz for the excellent presentation which captured a lot of information, including the vision and mission of the Office of DEI, in a short amount of time. He also commented about how some people feel about the history of not being fair to all groups and about how Hampton is leading the way in the right direction. Lastly, he commended Mr. Diaz for doing so many positive things with only one other staff person's assistance and then called upon any other members of Council who wished to comment on the topic.

Councilwoman Harper commended Mr. Diaz on the presentation. She shared that she is a proud graduate of parts 1 and 2 of the Diversity College and encouraged her colleagues on Council to attend if they have not already. She spoke about how the sessions are informative, transparent and candid and provide an opportunity to hear other individuals' beliefs and opinions and how the sessions help people understand why this work is being done. Councilwoman Harper also asked about opportunities for students or graduates of the program to facilitate it and if opportunities exist for citizens who would like to volunteer.

Mr. Diaz thanked Mayor Tuck and Councilwoman Harper for the positive comments. He indicated that three graduates have been brought on as facilitators which speaks to how the program empowers people to host these conversations. He clarified that those individuals were DEI professionals from other programs, but also went through Hampton's program to prove themselves in the field. With regard to volunteerism, Mr. Diaz shared that there are many opportunities for people to volunteer. In addition, participants are given a description of all Boards and Commissions during the program which oftentimes leads to them applying to participate on a board or commission.

Councilman Brown thanked Mr. Diaz for the presentation and referenced his own experience dating back to the early 1990's. He shared that he was familiar with former Executive Director, Harry Quiett, and spoke about how Mr. Quiett was instrumental in getting things established. He also spoke about his own participation in getting these programs moving forward years ago and the conversations that took place back then related to institutional racism, systemic racism, and intercultural racism.

Councilman Brown noted that in the early days, staff offered special training on diversity to police officers and asked if this is still being done or if that is now instituted in the Police Academy.

Mr. Diaz shared that the Office of DEI has partnered with the Police Department to train cadets on the facets of diversity, equity and inclusion and putting them in service roles before they receive their badges, guns and bulletproof vests so that they are aware of the communities they will be serving. He noted that these activities took place under the leadership of former Police Chief Mark Talbot and is being supported by current Police Chief Jimmie Wideman.

Councilman Bowman shared that he is a graduate of all three levels of the Diversity College and is also certified. He thanked Mr. Diaz for his excellent leadership and for continuing this important work.

Vice Mayor Gray agreed with the Mayor in that Mr. Diaz did a great job of presenting so much information in a short time. He also applauded Mr. Diaz for the work he has done to continue to bring festivals like the Mosaic Festival and the Phabulous Phoebus Festival as the people of Hampton seem to thoroughly enjoy festivals. He asked Mr. Diaz to confirm the date of the Mosaic Festival so that people can prepare to attend in advance.

Mr. Diaz confirmed that the Mosaic Festival will be held on April 20, 2024. The goal is to determine a date that the festival can be held at that same time every year so that citizens can prepare to attend in advance. In addition, the office plans to include the Earth Day celebration around the same time.

Lastly, Vice Mayor Gray mentioned that people have missed some of the other festivals that no longer take place, like Bay Days, and applauded Mr. Diaz and the Office of DEI for combining festivals and their other efforts to please the citizens. He also thanked Mr. Diaz for his leadership.

## REGIONAL ISSUES

There were no regional issues for discussion.

## NEW BUSINESS

There were no items of new business.

## CLOSED SESSION

2. [23-0323](#) Closed session pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711.A (.1), (.3), and (.6) to discuss appointments as listed on the agenda, to discuss city council appointees, to discuss the disposition of property in the Olde Hampton and Downtown Hampton areas of the City where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining or negotiating strategy of the City, and to discuss or consider the investment of public funds where competition or bargaining is involved, where, if made public initially, the financial interest of the city would be adversely affected.

A motion was made by Councilmember Billy Hobbs and seconded by Councilmember Hope Harper, that this Closed Session - Motion be approved. Prior to her vote, Councilwoman Mugler made the following statement:

I consulted with the City Attorney because I have an immediate family member who works in a part-time capacity of consulting and marketing sales for the Peninsula Baseball, the entity that actually leases from War Memorial Stadium, which is owned by the Peninsula Stadium Authority, whose members the City Council appoints and provides funding. So, due to my immediate family member's paid compensation, as described, out of an abundance of caution as this may present a conflict of interest, I am disqualifying myself from that particular discussion in our closed session and will abstain from the subsequent vote this evening and, as such, I will excuse myself from the room during all discussion regarding matters concerning Peninsula Stadium Authority and rejoin my Council colleagues when that discussion is complete.

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 7 - Councilmember Bowman, Councilmember Brown, Vice Mayor Gray, Councilmember Harper, Councilmember Hobbs, Councilmember Mugler and Mayor Tuck

3. [23-0198](#) Consideration of Appointments to a Hampton VA 250 Committee
4. [23-0322](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Athletic Hall of Fame
5. [23-0326](#) Consideration of an Appointment to the Citizens' Unity Commission
6. [23-0330](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Golf Course Advisory Committee
7. [23-0331](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Peninsula Stadium Authority
8. [23-0334](#) Consideration of an Appointment to the H2O Community Development Authority

#### **CERTIFICATION**

9. [23-0337](#) Resolution Certifying Closed Session



A motion was made by Councilmember Hobbs and seconded by Councilmember Brown, that this Closed Session - Certification be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 7 - Councilmember Bowman, Councilmember Brown, Vice Mayor Gray, Councilmember Harper, Councilmember Hobbs, Councilmember Mugler and Mayor Tuck

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:52 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, CMC  
Clerk of Council

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