



City of Hampton

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

Council Approved Minutes - Draft 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, January 28, 2026

1:00 PM

Council Chambers

AGENDA

Mayor Gray called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. All members of the City Council were present except for Councilwoman Harper, who had indicated she would be a bit late.

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

Excused 1 - Councilmember Hope L. Harper

CALL TO ORDER

JIMMY GRAY PRESIDED

1. [26-0027](#) Hampton City Schools Capital Projects Update

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

The Hampton City Council Work Session opened with Mayor Jimmy Gray welcoming attendees and noting that two presentations were scheduled for the afternoon. He invited City Manager Mary Bunting to introduce the first item, which focused on school capital improvements.

City Manager Bunting explained that several Council members had toured school facilities the previous day alongside School Board members and Superintendent Dr. Haynes. Because the public could not attend those tours, the purpose of the presentation was to share before-and-after images demonstrating how the City's

capital improvement funds are being used. She emphasized that while the School Board makes decisions regarding school operations, all operating and capital budgets must run through the City's budget process for approval. She stated that staff and Council are impressed with how effectively the funds are being used.

Dr. Richard Mason, Chair of the School Board, expressed sincere appreciation for the partnership between City Council and the School Board. He described the relationship as one rooted in mutual respect, shared responsibility, and a collective commitment to student success. He noted that many of his colleagues across the state do not experience the same collaborative relationship with their governing bodies. Dr. Mason reiterated Hampton City Schools' guiding mantra, "One community, one transformation, excellence with intentionality," explaining that when the City and school division work together, they create sustainable, forward-thinking investments in students and facilities. He stressed that capital improvements are not simply about infrastructure, but about ensuring that learning environments reflect the high expectations held for students, staff, and families.

Superintendent Dr. Haynes echoed those sentiments and thanked Council for its continued collaboration and trust. He stated that the capital improvement tour allowed City leaders to see firsthand how tax dollars are being used not merely to maintain buildings, but to transform learning spaces that support safety, innovation, and student success. He emphasized that the City's commitment makes a real difference for students and staff and strengthens the broader community. Dr. Dan Bowling, Chief Operations Officer, presented an overview of the division's capital projects, beginning with the largest completed project from the summer: the full renovation of Bassette Elementary School. The school, built in 1970, had remained in continuous operation for 55 years without undergoing a major renovation. Prior to the work, the building appeared dated and worn, with single-pane windows, rusted door frames, cracked sidewalks, a deteriorating parking lot, an undersized main office, outdated classrooms with mismatched furniture, aging chalkboards, crowded specialty classrooms, and restrooms in need of full replacement.

The renovation included installation of new storefront windows and steel doors, double-pane glass, upgraded electrical systems, LED lighting, new flooring, fresh paint throughout the interior and exterior, renovated office spaces, updated media center furniture, modern classroom furniture packages, whiteboards, bulletin boards, decorative hallway tile, ADA-compliant sidewalks, new landscaping, resurfaced play areas, and cafeteria tables featuring the school logo. Restrooms were completely

renovated and heating units were relocated to the ceiling to improve safety. The classrooms were designed to support flexible learning configurations, allowing desks to be arranged in clusters, rows, or collaborative layouts. The overall result was described as a transformation that made the school feel brand new. The total cost for the Bassette renovation was approximately four to five million dollars, significantly less than the more than thirty million dollars it would cost to build a new elementary school.

Additional summer projects included the renovation of sixteen science classrooms and nine science prep rooms at Lindsay, Eaton, and Tarrant Middle Schools. These spaces had not been updated in approximately sixty years and contained fixed, outdated cabinetry that did not support modern science instruction. The renovations included demolition, new ceilings, LED lighting, decorative flooring, painting, updated science cabinetry and countertops, new teacher stations, and improved prep room storage. The redesigned classrooms maximized instructional space and incorporated school colors to foster pride.

Several media centers across the division were also renovated, including those at Asbury, Langley, Mary Peake, Bryan, Machen, Burbank, Armstrong, and Moton. These spaces had previously been outdated and crowded with mismatched furniture and inadequate lighting. Renovations included demolition, new walls, upgraded electrical systems, new ceilings, LED lighting, carpet, shelving, and a wide range of movable furniture and soft seating options. The division installed 315 new bookshelves with capacity for more than 60,000 books, 185 soft seating options, and over 65 tables with 260 chairs, creating bright, welcoming environments designed to foster a lifelong love of reading.

School safety improvements included enclosing breezeways at six schools to secure entry and exit points while creating additional instructional space. All middle school tracks were repaired, paved, and lined for physical education and competitions. All four high school tracks were renovated and rubberized. Baseball and softball fields at four high schools were upgraded with new dugouts, fencing, backstops, and wireless scoreboards. Roof replacements totaling over 258,000 square feet were completed at Smith Elementary, Langley Elementary, and Bethel High School. HVAC systems were upgraded at Burbank Elementary and Phoebus High School, adding over 250 tons of heating and cooling capacity. Seventeen digital marquees were installed, meaning every school now has a modern display sign. Jones Magnet School received ceiling replacements, over 1,000 LED lights, 233 new doors, and bathroom upgrades.

Dr. Bowling also highlighted major long-term investments, including the previously completed 37,000-square-foot science wing addition at Kecoughtan High School and the upcoming 176,000-square-foot science addition at Bethel High School scheduled to open in November 2026, which will house science classrooms and Academies of Hampton programs. Planning is underway for additional summer 2026 projects, including renovations at Mary Peake, Burbank, Langley, Aberdeen, Bethel, Hampton High, the Adult Learning Center, Bridgeport Academy, and storefront spaces at Peninsula Town Center for the Academies of Hampton. City Manager Bunting provided financial context, explaining that the City typically allocates approximately 7.5 million dollars annually for school maintenance and technology needs. In the newly adopted five-year Capital Improvement Plan, funding increases to approximately 11.5 million dollars annually in later years, totaling just under 66 million dollars over the five-year period. She noted that roughly 11.4 million dollars was spent on the projects completed this past summer alone. She emphasized that the schools are using the funds strategically and efficiently.

Vice Mayor Brown described the tour as eye-opening and stated that Bassette Elementary was the “grand finale.” He emphasized the importance of investing in Title I schools and noted how the transformation creates an environment that excites both students and teachers. He expressed pride in supporting what he called one of the best school systems in Virginia.

Councilwoman Campbell commented on how students had previously expressed a desire for schools that feel more connected to real life and praised the Academies model, particularly the future hospital simulation space at Bethel.

Councilwoman Ferebee praised the leadership of Dr. Haynes and the School Board, stating that Hampton’s greatness is strengthened by the work being done in its schools. As a graduate of Hampton City Schools, she expressed pride in the transformation and emphasized the importance of providing students with the tools needed for success.

Councilwoman Mugler, who has a background in education, commended the thoughtful design choices, furniture selections, lighting upgrades, restroom safety improvements, and overall transformation. She highlighted the removal of portable classrooms at Kecoughtan as a particularly meaningful improvement and emphasized the importance of publicly sharing these visuals so residents understand how their tax dollars are being invested.

Councilman Bowman stated that the tour validated the collaboration between Council and the School Board. He noted that students voluntarily attended the tour on a staff day and were enthusiastic about their schools, which he viewed as evidence that the division is on the right path. He also pointed out that the design of single-use restrooms eliminates gender-related restroom concerns seen in other districts.

Mayor Gray concluded by tying the presentation back to Hampton's strategic priority of an educated citizenry. He stated that transformation applies not only to graduation rates and academic achievement, but also to physical learning environments. He emphasized that Hampton has invested significantly in school improvements while lowering the tax rate by ten cents, demonstrating responsible fiscal management. He requested a comprehensive report detailing the total amount invested in school capital improvements over the years so that Council can clearly communicate the scale of investment to the public.

The City Manager agreed to work with staff to compile that report. Dr. Bowling closed by thanking Council for its partnership and support, noting that continued collaboration will allow even greater improvements in the future.

Presented by Dr. Richard Mason, Chair of the Hampton School Board; Dr. Raymond Haynes, Superintendent of Hampton City Schools; and Dr. Dan Bowling, Chief Operations Officer, Hampton City Schools. Information was also presented by John Coberly, Maintenance Supervisor and Tena Zanders, Project Manager. Also in attendance were School Board members Ann Cherry, Dr. Tina Banks-Gray and Dr. Reginald Woodhouse along with members of the Hampton City Schools leadership team.

Councilwoman Harper arrived at 1:30 p.m. during the presentation from Hampton City Schools.

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

2. [26-0003](#) Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) System Optimization Plan (SOP) Update

Attachments: [Final Presentation](#)

Mayor Jimmy Gray requested that the City Manager introduce the next presentation.

City Manager Mary Bunting stated that in early 2025, the City of Hampton and the City of Newport News engaged a transit consultant to review the Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) System Optimization Plan (SOP) and assess its impacts on both communities. She explained that City staff and the consultant have worked collaboratively with HRT over the past several months to refine the plan to ensure reliable and efficient transit service while addressing HRT's broader financial constraints. She invited Deputy City Manager Brian DeProfio to present the update.

Deputy City Manager Brian DeProfio referenced a December presentation by HRT regarding the System Optimization Plan. He explained that the plan is intended to improve efficiency within the transit system and address challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. He stated that ridership remains below pre-pandemic levels, although it has improved from its lowest point. He further noted that HRT has experienced an ongoing driver shortage, with approximately 100 fewer drivers than needed in recent years. Financial challenges, including increased operating costs and reduced fare revenues, have also impacted the system.

Mr. DeProfio stated that the goal of the System Optimization Plan is to maximize available drivers and funding while improving service reliability and efficiency. He explained that the plan seeks to simplify routes, reduce transfers, and better align service with current ridership patterns and community needs.

He described micro-transit as a key component of the plan. Micro transit is an on-demand service operating within defined zones using smaller vehicles. The service allows riders to travel within the zone or connect to fixed-route service. He stated that the micro-transit pilot program launched on January 12, 2025. Micro-transit is intended to serve lower-density areas with lower ridership demand, providing transit access in a more cost-effective manner than fixed-route buses.

Mr. DeProfio reviewed current weekday midday service on the Peninsula, noting that most routes currently operate at 60-minute intervals, with limited 30-minute

service along key corridors such as Jefferson Avenue, Shell Road, and Mercury Boulevard. Under the proposed plan, most 60-minute routes would transition to 30-minute service to improve frequency and reliability.

He explained that within the existing micro-transit pilot zone, certain 60-minute fixed routes would be replaced with on-demand micro-transit service. Additional micro-transit zones are proposed in the Fox Hill area and along Mallory Street, where density and ridership levels are lower. These changes would allow HRT to enhance service frequency in higher-demand corridors while maintaining transit access in lower-density areas.

Mr. DeProfio provided examples of route modifications intended to reduce transfers and improve direct connectivity, including Route 103 connecting eastern Hampton to the shipyard and Route 109 connecting the VA Medical Center to Thomas Nelson Community College.

He reported that the proposed plan would reduce required service hours and drivers, decreasing the number of drivers needed on the Peninsula by approximately 25. He further stated that transit proximity would improve slightly, with the percentage of residents near transit service increasing from approximately 59 percent to 61 percent. The number of residents and jobs located near 30-minute service would significantly increase due to the transition from 60-minute to 30-minute routes.

Mr. DeProfio stated that HRT will begin public outreach on the proposed plan, with information to be posted on the GoHRT website. The HRT Board is expected to consider action on the System Optimization Plan in April 2026. Implementation would begin in October 2027.

Mayor Gray inquired about farebox recovery, specifically what percentage of micro-transit costs would be recouped through the \$2 fare. Mr. DeProfio stated that the City currently has limited data, as the Hampton pilot program is supported by grant funding. He noted that fixed-route farebox recovery is currently approximately six to seven percent. Karen Kitsis, Chief Planning and Development Officer for HRT, stated that additional financial data will become available as the pilot matures and that assumptions regarding costs and revenues are being developed to provide a more complete financial picture.

Mayor Gray referenced Hampton University and suggested evaluating whether a micro-transit zone serving university students might be more cost-effective than the existing circulator bus. Mr. DeProfio stated that the revised Route 109 would provide 30-minute service to Hampton University and that staff would evaluate potential micro-transit options for that area.

There being no further questions or comments, the presentation concluded.

Presented by Brian DeProfio, Deputy City Manager, and Karen Kitsis, Senior Director for Planning and Development, Hampton Roads Transit.

REGIONAL ISSUES

There were no regional issues.

NEW BUSINESS

There were no items of new business.

CLOSED SESSION

- 3. [26-0011](#) Closed session pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711.A(.3) to discuss or consider the disposition of publicly held real property in the areas of Downtown Hampton, Phoebus, Coliseum Central, and Briarfield Road, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the City and Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711.A (.1) to discuss appointments as listed on the agenda.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Steven Brown and seconded by Councilmember Randy Bowman, Sr., that this Closed Session - Motion 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

- 4. [25-0252](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Hampton Redevelopment & Housing Authority (HRHA)

- 5. [25-0349](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Citizens Police Advisory Group (CPAG)

Attachments: 2026 - CPAG Attendance calculations

- 6. [25-0352](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Citizens' Unity Commission (CUC)

- 7. [26-0020](#) Consideration of an Appointment to the Board of Zoning Appeals

- 8. [26-0022](#) Consideration of an Appointment to the Peninsula Alcohol Safety Action Program Advisory Board

- 9. [26-0023](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Golf Course Advisory Committee

- 10. [26-0024](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Hampton Senior Citizens Advisory Committee

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

CERTIFICATION

- 11. [26-0012](#) Resolution Certifying Closed Session

At 4:23 p.m., a motion was made by Vice Mayor Steven Brown and seconded by Councilmember Michelle Ferebee, 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 adjourned at 4:23 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 _____