



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, June 11, 2025

1:00 PM

Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Gray called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. All members of City Council were present with the exception of Vice Mayor Brown and Councilwoman Ferebee.

Present 5 - Councilmember Randy C. Bowman Sr., Councilmember Carolyn S. Campbell, Councilmember Hope L. Harper, Councilmember Martha Mugler, and Mayor Jimmy Gray

Excused 2 - Vice Mayor Steven L. Brown, and Councilmember Michelle T. Ferebee

JIMMY GRAY PRESIDED

Vice Mayor Brown arrived at 1:02 p.m., right after roll call.

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

Excused 1 - Councilmember Michelle T. Ferebee

AGENDA

1. [25-0074](#) Hampton Roads Alliance Update Presentation

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

City Manager Mary Bunting introduced Doug Smith, Chief Executive Officer of the Hampton Roads Alliance, our region's leading economic development organization.

Mr. Smith provided a brief tribute to the late Councilman and Vice Mayor, Randy Gilliland.

Mr. Smith presented an overview that the Hampton Roads Alliance has made a strategic shift toward defense and energy-focused economic development, reflecting the region's longstanding role as a military-industrial center. According to Mr. Smith, this core strength had been underutilized in previous economic strategies but has become a focal point over the past two to three years. The Alliance has leveraged initiatives such as the AUKUS (A Trilateral security pact between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States) program to position Hampton and the Peninsula for sustained growth. Private sector engagement has played a growing role in this transformation. The Alliance's investor base has increased from approximately 60 to 110 companies, while community membership has expanded from 11 to 15 organizations. This marks a departure from the traditional public-sector-led development model, signaling a more collaborative and diversified approach.

A central element of the Alliance's strategy involves attracting traded-sector businesses, while also supporting the growth of existing local enterprises, which represent the majority of regional economic activity. The organization has also significantly enhanced its research and business intelligence capabilities to support data-driven decision-making. The Alliance plans to launch a Regional Investment Playbook and provide updates on the EVRIFA (Eastern Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority) initiative, reinforcing its commitment to building a resilient and growth-oriented regional economy.

Mr. Smith highlighted the Alliance's expanding private-sector investment, now supported by over 100 companies across 15 localities. Historically focused on sectors like port logistics, food and beverage, and shared services, the Alliance has pivoted toward energy and defense, reflecting national trends in reindustrialization and energy security. Mr. Smith emphasized the region's unmatched defense capabilities, proximity to military assets and NASA, and potential to anchor critical supply chains. Mr. Smith stressed the urgency of leveraging Hampton Roads' role as a military metro, tech hub, port powerhouse, and emerging energy leader, especially as global forces drive the need to rebuild supply chains and manufacturing. Recent Alliance-led efforts have delivered measurable results-with nearly \$2.5 billion in investment and 7,000 jobs over five years, compared to \$0.5 billion and 6,000 jobs in the previous decade.

Mr. Smith highlighted the region's unique, yet fragmented economic geography and the challenge of effectively conveying its value to potential investors. To overcome this, the Alliance uses helicopter tours to provide a full-picture view of key assets like Newport News Shipbuilding, Naval Station Oceana, and the port. Mr. Smith outlined an emerging regional narrative with distinct hubs: research on the Peninsula, maritime and defense in the harbor, innovation in the east, and manufacturing/logistics in areas like Isle of Wight and Suffolk.

The Alliance is investing heavily in both pillars of the agreement: submarine manufacturing (Pillar 1) and advanced technologies like AI, quantum, and cybersecurity (Pillar 2), recognizing that America's strategic edge lies in software and innovation. The Alliance is developing a regional investment playbook, to be unveiled at an upcoming event, identifying key projects aligned with a broader economic strategy. A detailed Department of Defense (DoD) spending analysis revealed that Hampton Roads is the fifth-largest recipient of DoD funds nationally, and the largest per capita, making the case for deeper engagement with defense-related opportunities. With 20% of U.S. shipbuilding occurring in the region, the stakes are high for supporting the submarine industrial base.

Mr. Smith concluded his presentation by highlighting the opportunities for collaborative growth in the areas of energy, defense, and cybersecurity throughout the Hampton Roads region. Discussion focused on the importance of EVRIFA, which the Hampton Roads Alliance has managed for approximately 18 months. EVRIFA allows participating localities to jointly invest in and benefit from projects that extend beyond individual municipal boundaries.

Mayor Gray thanked Mr. Smith for his presentation and invited questions.

Vice Mayor Steven L. Brown raised questions about the distribution of defense spending across localities, referencing a slide that showed Virginia Beach and Norfolk at around \$134 million. Mr. Smith clarified that while, it might be surprising, over \$3 billion of Virginia Beach's defense funding is attributed to one company, something even local officials weren't fully aware of. He stated that more detailed data is available, including supplier breakdowns, and that the Alliance is working with local staff to put this information to use.

Vice Mayor inquired whether the region is positioned to attract a major league sports team. Mr. Smith explained that while professional sports are important, the region currently lacks the infrastructure and financial capacity required for top-tier leagues like the NBA or MLB. However, he noted that "second-tier" sports such as soccer or hockey present more realistic opportunities and emphasized the growing significance of participatory sports in the area.

Ms. Bunting shared Hampton Roads' regional momentum and reaffirmed the City of Hampton's active engagement in advancing collective initiatives. Hampton holds two seats with the Hampton Roads Alliance leadership, Mayor Gray serves on the executive board as a designated mayor, and Ms. Bunting serves as chair of the Chief Administrative Officers group, while Economic Development Director Leonard Sledge participates on the regional economic development "red team."

Ms. Bunting discussed the potential for regional sports facilities and shared that the EVRIFA now provided a pathway for financing shared assets like stadiums or arenas, without placing the full burden on a single locality.

Presented by Doug Smith, President and CEO of the Hampton Roads Alliance

2. [25-0136](#) Serving an Older Peninsula

Attachments: [PCF Presentation](#)
[PAA Presentation](#)
[Report](#)

Ms. Bunting welcomed a joint presentation by the Peninsula Community Foundation (PCF) and the Peninsula Agency on Aging (PAA). The presentation was led by Ms. Adelia Thompson, CEO of PCF and Mr. Bill Massey, representing PAA.

Ms. Thompson began the presentation by introducing two interns accompanying the team: Xavier Kennedy, a rising senior at Christopher Newport University's Luter School of Business and Connor Johnson, a recent pre-med graduate also from CNU. Their contributions helped bolster capacity during the study's follow-up phase. Ms. Thompson acknowledged Jennifer Bramley, the Foundation's Director of Grants and Fund Management, for her behind-the-scenes leadership and support.

Ms. Thompson highlighted PCF's mission and the recent study on the region's aging demographics. Special recognition was given to Mr. Bill Massey and the PAA for their daily commitment to addressing the challenges identified in the study. Ms. Thompson highlighted the Foundation's role, is not to provide direct services but to serve as a backbone organization supporting nonprofits, governments, and civic partners who do.

Ms. Thompson highlighted PCF's role in advancing community well-being through partnerships, capacity building, and expanding financial resources. These pillars guide their work, whether it's helping nonprofits scale their impact or channeling new funding into crucial initiatives. The current service area includes six localities: Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson, York County, James City County, and

Williamsburg.

Ms. Thompson provided an overview of the Center for Community Research, launched as part of retiring CEO Mike Monteith's vision to make ongoing regional data collection more sustainable. Its inaugural project, Serving an Older Peninsula, was funded by the region's six municipalities and led by respected researcher Elizabeth Hughes. This demographic study revealed a dramatic aging trend across the region: while the 30-60 age group grew by 20%, the 60-80 group grew by 133%. These findings are intended to support smarter planning and resource allocation as the population continues to shift.

The presentation continued with the study's findings on the region's aging population, revealing distinct trends across the six municipalities. Each locality's demographic shift is shaped by different factors. By 2050, certain neighborhoods across the Peninsula are projected to have significantly higher concentrations of residents over the age of 80. Healthcare needs will rise with age-related conditions and disabilities, while more seniors will require caregiving support, yet many lack nearby family to provide it. Housing poses another challenge, as most homes were built before 2000 and are not designed for aging in place. Transportation remains limited, further complicating access to essential services. Emergency Medical Service usage by older adults is already disproportionately high, a trend mirrored in national data and likely to continue locally. Financial strain is another concern, as older adults generally spend less, reducing sales tax revenue, while more may qualify for property tax relief, both of which impact municipal budgets. The growing demand for caregivers and healthcare services also poses workforce and economic challenges. These issues have direct implications for local government resources, emergency services, and community planning.

Mr. Massey provided an overview of PAA, part of a national network of over 600 area Agencies on Aging established under the Older Americans Act (OAA). While smaller than agencies in major metropolitan areas, PAA shares the same mission: to support older adults and their caregivers through advocacy, services, and partnerships. The agency collaborates extensively across the private, public, and nonprofit sectors to meet regional needs. Key services funded by the OAA include elder rights advocacy, caregiver support, nutrition programs, health and wellness initiatives, and in-home supportive care such as case management and transportation.

Mr. Massey highlighted specialized offerings like the Veteran Directed Care program in collaboration with the Hampton VA Medical Center, allowing eligible veterans to remain in their homes with tailored support. PAA also offers transportation assistance to veterans age 60 and older, though awareness of the

program remains limited. Transportation, in general, was identified as an ongoing service gap, particularly for individuals with mobility challenges who cannot access curb-to-curb services like Handy Ride. PAA delivers a range of services across the region, reaching over 9,000 individuals annually with programs like Meals on Wheels, home care, and wellness support. In Hampton alone, more than 30,000 meals were delivered last year.

Mr. Massey highlighted the significant strain experienced by family caregivers, who often juggle full-time employment with caring for loved ones, especially those with dementia. Caregiving can lead to emotional stress, sleep deprivation, financial hardship, and in some cases, the need to leave the workforce entirely. These challenges also impact employers, with national data suggesting an average annual productivity loss of over \$6,000 per caregiver employee.

Mr. Massey concluded the presentation by highlighting PAA's range of caregiver support services. Services include support groups, educational programs, the Memory Café, and personalized care coordination. A new CMS-funded "GUIDE" program through Medicare supports people living with dementia and ease the burden on caregivers by offering coordinated healthcare, respite, and education.

Presented by Adelia Thompson, Chief Executive Officer of the Peninsula Community Foundation and Bill Massey, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Peninsula Agency on Aging

At 2:02, Mayor Gray indicated that Council would take agenda item #4 out of order and just ahead of agenda item #3. He also called for a 10 minute recess. The meeting reconvened at 2:12 p.m.

4. [25-0167](#) Briefing on Amenity Improvements Made to Hampton Roads Transit Bus Stops

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

Ms. Bunting introduced the third presentation. The City of Hampton, in collaboration with Hampton Roads Transit (HRT), provided an update on its strategic reinvestment of surplus transit funding into bus stop amenity upgrades across key city routes. Interim Public Works Director Michael Bowry presented the progress of this effort, which began in 2012 and continues to be an evolving partnership aimed at improving rider experience and accessibility.

The upgrades primarily focused on routes 101 (Hampton to Newport News via

Kecoughtan Road) and 114 (Hampton to Warwick Boulevard and 73rd Street via Mercury Boulevard), and included the addition of benches, trash cans, solar-powered lighting, and varying levels of shelter coverage based on available right-of-way.

Mr. Bowry highlighted four tiers of bus stop amenities: Tier 1 shelters offer the most complete features: three-sided enclosures, full roofs, benches, trash cans, and solar lighting. Twenty-one stops have been upgraded to this level. Tier 3 shelters are similar but lack full side enclosures, offering partial protection and the same basic amenities. Forty-one stops received Tier 3 upgrades. Tier 4 shelters include a roof with no side walls, plus a bench, trash can, and lighting. Only two stops were upgraded to this level. Bench & Trash Can Only stops, with no shelter structure, were installed at seven locations where right-of-way limitations prevented shelter installation.

Mr. Bowry shared that the availability of sidewalk and public right-of-way directly influenced the type of structure that could be installed. Wider areas allowed for more comprehensive shelters, while narrower or obstructed sidewalks (often due to underground utilities) limited options.

Vice Mayor Brown raised concerns about weather protection, especially for senior riders. Mr. Bowry confirmed that while full enclosure isn't always feasible, all efforts are made to provide roofs and basic comfort and safety features, including lighting for nighttime security. Overall, 71 bus stops have been upgraded across the city. Further enhancements are being evaluated, including potential eligibility adjustments to feeder routes that could expand future improvement opportunities across Hampton's transit system.

Mayor Gray questioned how many additional shelters are available for installation. Mr. Bowry clarified that while he didn't have an exact count of additional shelters still available for installation, all bus stops along the primary HRT "backbone" routes, specifically Routes 101 and 114, have already been reviewed and addressed through the current funding allocation. These routes were prioritized due to their higher frequency and ridership. Some stops on "feeder" routes, which connect to the main HRT corridors, were also included in the amenity upgrades. However, for further expansion citywide, new funding and board approval are needed. HRT recently held a retreat in May, during which they discussed reallocating or expanding funding. If approved by the HRT board, this would open the door to additional shelter installations beyond the initial HRT framework. Right-of-way constraints, especially in cases involving private property, remain a key consideration that can affect future shelter placement.

Presented by Mike Bowry, Public Works Administrator

3. [25-0152](#) Digital Infrastructure Expansion Initiative

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

Ms. Bunting acknowledged Marcellus Nixon, from the Southside Broadband Network Authority and highlighted the significant progress south side communities have made in developing high-speed broadband infrastructure. Originally launched to address digital disparities in underserved areas, the initiative has become a major asset to the region. The Authority is looking to collaborate with Hampton and Newport News to connect and expand broadband capabilities across the tunnel. The goal is to improve digital access in underserved neighborhoods, enhance commercial competitiveness, and leverage the transatlantic broadband cable anchored in Virginia Beach to power regional economic growth and ensure equitable access to 21st-century digital infrastructure.

Ms. Bunting introduced Chief Information Officer, David Williams, to present the last item on the agenda.

Mr. Williams provided an update on the regional broadband initiative and its economic development implications beyond just technology. In 2018, the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission supported the south side communities in launching a regional fiber network designed to connect Hampton Roads to ultra-fast transatlantic subsea cables-most notably the MAREA (submarine cable system) cable from Spain to Virginia Beach, which is among the fastest in the world. This network promises speeds exponentially greater than current consumer internet and is essential for keeping pace with growing digital demands.

To manage the infrastructure, the Southside Network Authority (SNA) was formed to serve Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Chesapeake, and Virginia Beach. GTS (Global Technical Systems) was selected to maintain and market the “regional connectivity ring.” The next phase involves expanding this fiber ring across the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel and Monitor-Merrimac into the Peninsula, connecting to Hampton, Newport News, and ultimately to data hubs in Ashburn, Virginia, and Atlanta, Georgia.

The initiative aims to increase broadband competition, lower costs, and expand access, particularly in underserved areas still relying on outdated copper infrastructure. This would also benefit government agencies, health systems, and institutions like NASA Langley by providing high-capacity, high-speed connections.

Currently, Hampton and Newport News are partnering to identify funding sources and are in discussions with SNA about an ownership-based model in which each city maintains control of its infrastructure. The proposed path forward includes a

five-phase plan, beginning with an asset inventory and a needs assessment to determine where improved service is most urgently required.

Mr. Williams emphasized that economic development is already underway in these communities, making it more practical to connect to existing momentum rather than building from scratch. The outlined process includes five phases: 1. Asset assessment. 2 Needs assessment. 3. Conceptual design. 4. High-level design. 5. Low-level design. The project doesn't have to proceed strictly in sequence; portions of the network can be activated early to avoid underutilized infrastructure and generate immediate impact.

The estimated total buildout cost for Hampton and Newport News is \$15 million, with efforts underway to secure federal, state, and local grant funding to offset those costs. The first step, connecting across the tunnels, will require collaboration and planning. The initial three phases (asset and needs assessment plus conceptual design) are projected to cost \$250,000.

Councilwoman Harper inquired about the timeline for these phases. Mr. Williams deferred to Mr. Nixon to provide ballpark estimates. Asset assessment could take 45-60 days, the needs assessment about two weeks, and the conceptual design around a month, totaling roughly five months. Mr. Nixon stressed that with close coordination and parallel efforts, certain network connections could be activated earlier in the process. The need for city input in identifying priority areas for investment, reinforcing the collaborative nature of this regional broadband initiative was highlighted.

There was discussion about governance and participation. Rather than creating a new body, Hampton and Newport News are in conceptual talks to join the existing Southside Network Authority (SNA), with buy-in modeled after the initial \$5 million contributions made by the five south side cities. This would entitle them to equal benefits and decision-making power, similar to other regional collaborative entities. However, the scope of necessary investment still needs to be defined through an upcoming asset and needs assessment, particularly since Hampton and Newport News already have some existing infrastructure, though connecting across the tunnels remains a cost factor.

Mr. Nixon provided clarification about revenue and long-term sustainability. Entities like NASA and Hampton University wouldn't purchase direct service from the SNA, but from third-party internet providers who would lease access to the fiber infrastructure. The resulting fees would be paid to the cities, not the SNA, and could be placed in a reserve fund to support maintenance. This public-private partnership (P3) model, already in use on the south side, is designed to promote competition,

reduce broadband costs for consumers, and support future expansion of high-speed access throughout the region.

Mr. Nixon shared how regional broadband expansion would directly benefit residents and businesses, particularly in underserved areas. A key point was that while major internet service providers (ISPs) like Cox or Verizon already have existing infrastructure, often legacy copper lines, many communities lack access to modern, high-speed broadband. The proposed network would build out core infrastructure, significantly reducing capital costs for ISPs by allowing them to lease access and focus only on providing the final connection to homes and businesses. This model mirrors how early telephone providers operated by leasing shared infrastructure.

For homeowners, this infrastructure means more choice. In areas currently served by only one provider, new entrants could offer service by tapping into the shared broadband backbone, creating competition that would lower prices and improve quality. Highlights include broader impacts such as: economic development, medical innovation through telehealth, and greater equity in access to digital tools essential for work, school, and everyday life.

There was general discussion about cyber security risks, such as ransom ware or malware, on the regional broadband ring. Mr. Nixon clarified that the fiber infrastructure itself is essentially passive. The "ring" is just a physical connectivity backbone; it doesn't transmit data or interact with networks unless an internet service provider (ISP) or entity actively connects to it and installs the necessary hardware and software to enable data flow. Because of this, the responsibility for cyber security lies with the ISPs or third-party providers who deliver service over the ring. They are the ones who must implement firewalls, intrusion detection systems, encryption, and other protective measures to secure users' data and prevent malicious activity. The ring itself is not inherently vulnerable because it does not contain any intelligence or routing functions by default, it's the digital equivalent of an empty highway that only becomes active and subject to traffic once someone starts using it.

The proposed broadband infrastructure initiative is expected to enhance internet access in underserved areas of the city by introducing additional service options and reducing reliance on single-provider systems. The plan is designed to increase market competition, which may result in lower costs and improved service quality.

Discussion included the potential for the infrastructure to improve local connectivity and establish Hampton Roads as a strategic digital access point. Currently, there is no direct high-speed fiber connection between Hampton Roads and Northern Virginia, a region that hosts numerous global data centers. SNA aims to extend its

transatlantic fiber ring northward to enable direct, high-speed connections to these facilities, potentially enhancing the region's digital competitiveness. The investment in broadband infrastructure was designed to expand access, support economic development, and improve regional digital capabilities

Regarding broader connectivity, the build out linking Hampton Roads to Northern Virginia and Atlanta is expected to occur in phases. Member cities of the broadband authority would share expansion costs proportionally, based on traffic demand and growth. The infrastructure would allow localities to lease network access to internet service providers, generating revenue for system maintenance and regional reinvestment.

The meeting concluded with Ms. Bunting highlighting that planning funds have been allocated and are in place to proceed with the initial assessment phase.

Presented by David Williams, Chief Information Officer. Prior to the presentation beginning, Mary Bunting, the City Manager, introduced Marcellus Nixon, who was in the audience. Mr. Nixon is the Executive Director of the Southside Network Authority. Mr. Nixon also shared information.

At 2:28 p.m., Councilwoman Ferebee arrived which was during the presentation on item #25-0152.

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

REGIONAL ISSUES

There were no regional issues to report on.

NEW BUSINESS

There were no items of new business.

CLOSED SESSION

5. [25-0164](#) Closed session pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711.A

(.1) (.3) (.6) and (.8) to discuss appointments as listed on the agenda; the potential disposition of publicly held real property in the Buckroe and Coliseum Central areas, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the city's bargaining position or negotiating strategy; the potential acquisition of property for public purpose, potential disposition of publicly-owned property, and potential investment of public funds in the LaSalle Corridor, where discussion in open session would adversely affect the city's financial interest and negotiating strategy; and consultation with legal counsel regarding specific legal issues affecting the referenced transactions.

At 2:55 p.m., a motion was made by Councilmember Martha Mugler and seconded by Councilmember Hope Harper, 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

6. [25-0090](#) Consideration of an Appointment to the Virginia Peninsula Community College Board of Trustees
7. [25-0121](#) Consideration of an Appointment to the Building Code Board of Appeals
8. [25-0128](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Planning Commission
9. [25-0142](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Citizens' Engagement Advisory Review Commission (CEARC)
10. [25-0179](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Board of Review of Real Estate Assessments
11. [25-0183](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Towing Advisory Board
Councilwoman Ferebee left the room after consideration of the Towing Advisory Board appointments.
12. [25-0184](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Grievance Board

CERTIFICATION

13. [25-0166](#) Resolution Certifying Closed Session

Councilwoman Ferebee returned to the room following discussion of the Grievance Board appointments.

A motion was made by Councilmember Carolyn Campbell seconded by Councilmember Randy Bowman, Sr., 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 6:11 p.m.

Jimmy Gray
Mayor

Katherine K. Glass, MMC
Clerk of Council

Date approved by Council _____

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

