



# City of Hampton

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

## Council Approved Minutes - Final City Council Legislative Session

*Mayor George Wallace*  
*Vice Mayor Linda D. Curtis*  
*Councilmember W.H. "Billy" Hobbs*  
*Councilmember Will Moffett*  
*Councilmember Teresa V. Schmidt*  
*Councilmember Chris Snead*  
*Councilmember Donnie R. Tuck*

*STAFF: Mary Bunting, City Manager*  
*Vanessa T. Valldejuli, City Attorney*  
*Katherine K. Glass, CMC, Clerk of Council*

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**Wednesday, March 23, 2016**

**6:30 PM**

**Council Chambers**

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### CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mayor Wallace called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. with all members of the City Council present.

**Present:** 7 - Vice Mayor Linda D. Curtis, Councilmember Billy Hobbs, Councilmember Will Moffett, Councilmember Teresa V. Schmidt, Councilmember Chris Snead, Councilmember Donnie R. Tuck and Mayor George Wallace

### GEORGE E. WALLACE PRESIDED

### INVOCATION - Councilmember: Teresa Schmidt

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO FLAG

### MAYOR'S COMMENTS

### CONSENT AGENDA

Clerk of Council Katherine K. Glass read the protocol for the consent agenda and a summary of the consent items.

### Approval of the Consent Agenda

Motion made by Vice Mayor Curtis, seconded by Councilmember Schmidt, to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 7 - Vice Mayor Curtis, Councilmember Hobbs,  
Councilmember Moffett, Councilmember Schmidt,  
Councilmember Snead, Councilmember Tuck and Mayor  
Wallace

1. [16-0032](#) Approval of the Minutes from the Special Joint Session of City Council and Hampton Redevelopment and Housing Authority of February 24, 2016.

Item approved.

**Aye:** 7 - Vice Mayor Curtis, Councilmember Hobbs,  
Councilmember Moffett, Councilmember Schmidt,  
Councilmember Snead, Councilmember Tuck and Mayor  
Wallace

2. [16-0097](#) Resolution Authorizing the Transfer From the City of Hampton to the Economic Development Authority of the City of Hampton Two Parcels in Downtown Hampton, LRSN: 2003523 Known as 504 North King Street and LRSN 2003524 Known as 520 North King Street

**Attachments:** [Deed of Gift](#)

Item approved.

**Aye:** 7 - Vice Mayor Curtis, Councilmember Hobbs,  
Councilmember Moffett, Councilmember Schmidt,  
Councilmember Snead, Councilmember Tuck and Mayor  
Wallace

3. [16-0098](#) Resolution Appropriating \$190,381 of the Committed Fund Balance of the Home Elevation Revolving Loan Program to the Emergency Management Operating Budget and the Community Development Operating Budget, in the sums of \$40,381 and \$150,000, respectively, to Fund Current Recoverable Costs Associated with the Administration of the Home Elevation Revolving Loan Program and to Fund a Portion of the Cost of Professional Services Associated With the Dutch Dialogues  
Item approved.

**Aye:** 7 - Vice Mayor Curtis, Councilmember Hobbs,  
Councilmember Moffett, Councilmember Schmidt,  
Councilmember Snead, Councilmember Tuck and Mayor  
Wallace

## PRESENTATIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, AWARDS

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

### Ordinances

## GENERAL ITEMS

### Ordinances

### Resolutions

4. [16-0101](#) Resolution Determining Taser International, Inc. to be the Only Source Practicably Available from which to Procure Conducted Electrical Weapons ("CEWs") which will have connectivity with Hampton Police Division issued Body Worn Cameras and Evidence.com storage system, authorized for sole source by City Council on September 10, 2014.

**Attachments:** [Sole Manufacturer Letter](#)

City Manager Bunting introduced Police Chief Terry Sult who commented on the Resolution Determining Taser International, Inc. to be the sole source. He stated the resolution before Council today will allow the Police Department to expand the body-worn cameras to two-hundred forty and tasers to two-hundred forty while incorporating those in place into the new agreement. This will allow the Police Department to interconnect the body-worn cameras in the records management system and provide technology upgrades for both the body-worn cameras and tasers.

In response to Councilwoman Schmidt, Chief Sult stated that the cameras are both high quality video and audio.

Councilman Tuck thanked Chief Sult for his presentation and asked about the number of upgrades on the equipment. Chief Sult answered that the department would receive two body-camera upgrades and one taser upgrade every five years for each taser and includes maintenance on the equipment.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Curtis, and was seconded by Councilmember Schmidt. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 7 - Vice Mayor Curtis, Councilmember Hobbs, Councilmember Moffett, Councilmember Schmidt, Councilmember Snead, Councilmember Tuck and Mayor Wallace

### Appointments

5. [16-0104](#) Consideration of nominations to the Virginia Municipal League 2016 Policy Committees

**Attachments:** [2016 VML Memo](#)  
[2016 VML Nomination Form](#)  
[VML Policy Process](#)

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Curtis, with no second being required, that the following appointments take place: Billy Hobbs - Community and Economic Development, Teresa Schmidt - Environmental Quality, Chris Snead - Finance, Linda Curtis - General Laws, Donnie Tuck - Human Development and Education, and Will Moffett - Transportation. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 7 - Vice Mayor Curtis, Councilmember Hobbs, Councilmember Moffett, Councilmember Schmidt, Councilmember Snead, Councilmember Tuck and Mayor Wallace

### REPORTS BY CITY MANAGER, CITY COUNCIL, STAFF, COMMITTEES

Mayor Wallace indicated that because the Council and staff anticipated that many would be present to discuss Council's recent decision to name the previously unnamed Mercury Boulevard bridge after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the City Manager was asked to provide a brief review of the process to-date. Ms. Bunting asked Laura Fitzpatrick, Assistant City Manager, to do so.

- [16-0092](#) Resolution of the Council of the City of Hampton, Virginia, Naming the Mercury Boulevard Bridge Leading to Fort Monroe

as the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Bridge in Honor of Frank Baker, Shepard Mallory, and James Townsend

City Manager Bunting introduced Laura Fitzpatrick, Assistant City Manager, who gave a summary of the history on the naming of the Mercury Boulevard Bridge.

- In late 2009, City Council was approached with concerns that Hampton was the only major city in the region that did not have a monument or memorial of some type named in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King.
- In December 2009, then Assistant City Manager John Eagle made a presentation to the Hampton City Council in which he noted several options for singularly honoring Dr. King. His presentation included references to unnamed bridges.
- In 2010, the City Manager created a diverse work group of citizens to look at options for how to best honor Dr. King. The committee was comprised of roughly 60% men and 40% women and roughly 60% African Americans and 40% Caucasians. Because some members left the committee over time due to job relocation, death, etc., the committee has been repopulated with a goal of maintaining roughly the same demographic mix.
- Based on input from Council and community members, the group was given two charges. The first was to find a way to singularly honor Dr. King. The second was to find a way to honor Hampton residents who followed in Dr. King's footsteps through their pursuit of peace, progress and justice, since it was believed that the best measure of one's legacy is how they inspire others to continue their work. In Hampton, we have had many who have worked to proactively advance civil rights and unity. It was anticipated that the feature ultimately designed to do this would prominently feature Dr. King but would be equally focused on Hampton's heroes.
- In the years since that committee was formed, committee members have considered the criteria for the local hero's selection, where to place such a memorial, the design of such, etc. Because the development of a Hampton heroes/Dr. King Monument was considered to have the most impact, it received the most attention early on.

- However, the other mission of singularly recognizing Dr. King was still of import since Hampton remained a major city in the area without such a designation.
- The work of the committee thus turned to completing this task once the major heavy lifting of the Hampton Heroes/Dr. King civil rights memorial was completed.
- Not too surprisingly the committee returned to a solution which was suggested back in 2009 - unnamed bridges. Initial exploration considered road name changes or designations. For instance, King Street was considered for a memorial designation. However, this was rejected out of respect for the Colonial heritage it and Queen Street were named to honor. We also learned that there could be postal service and public safety challenges due to an inner Hampton University campus street being named after Dr. King. With all major public buildings already named, the staff and committee refocused on unnamed bridges.
- The Mercury Boulevard Bridge was ultimately chosen precisely because the Council, staff and committee recognized the legacy of Fort Monroe as Freedom's Fortress.
- During the Civil War, three brave slaves - Frank Baker, Shepard Mallory and James Townsend - took a chance and escaped just across the water to try their luck with the Union. It could not have been an easy decision as they rowed toward an uncertain fate. It was entirely possible that they would be sent back to their owners to face a certain death.
- General Benjamin Butler made a historic decision and declared these men contraband of war which provided safe refuge. This ultimately led to more and more African American men, women and children seeking asylum at the Fort. Many scholars have opined that General Butler's decision ultimately led to President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation speech and freedom for slaves. For this, among other reasons, Fort Monroe became known as Freedom's Fortress.
- The community members on the committee, along with staff and the Council, saw the Mercury Boulevard bridge as appropriate precisely because

of this history and said as much in the resolution that was adopted by Council naming the bridge after Dr. King on February 24, 2016.

- It is important to note that City staff has been in communication with the King Center and has confirmed that there is no charge to use Dr. King's name, just an approval process. Dr. King's civil rights work built on the foundation that Frank Baker, Shepard Mallory and James Townsend laid many years prior. Dr. King's work to build metaphorical bridges across races continued the work these brave men began. Thus, we all found the naming of the bridge appropriate and befitting of the Fort Monroe heritage.
- And yet, it has become clear that the connections we all saw are not seen as clearly by many others in the community. Since the City Council named the bridge after Dr. King, many have called upon the City to consider renaming the bridge.
- It has been reported that nearly 1200 people have signed a petition asking for that change. The leaders of the petition drive have said they seek a Fort Monroe connection. However, not all who signed the petition did so for the same reason, so we have had staff analyze the petition in great detail.
- We can say the following about the petition:
  - As of Monday morning, when staff analyzed the on-line petitions, there were 1180 signatures. Of these, 358 - more than 30% - did not leave a name as is customary on petitions. Another 88 - roughly 8% - were out of state or country. So, nearly 40% would not be considered valid in terms of normal petition rules.
  - Of those who signed their name and were listed as Virginia residents, there is no way to discern whether they are or are not Hampton residents although there are certainly some we recognize as not being Hampton residents.
  - Of those who left comments, over 70% cited a desire to have a strong Fort Monroe and/or Hampton connection when naming the bridge; only 18% cited a desire not to recognize Dr. King at all in our community.

- Some who signed the petition - roughly 10% - said to leave the name alone.

- So while many had reasons for signing the petition, the overwhelming consensus of those who spoke up both there and in the paper have clamored for a better Fort Monroe connection.

- Along with the on-line petition, Council has heard from other community members in the form of two petitions received on February 10th and February 24th asking Council to stay the course in honoring Dr. King. These petitions contained 209 signatures (79 and 130).

City Manager Mary Bunting stated that this completes the staff report and thanked Assistant City Manager Laura Fitzpatrick and the staff for analyzing the petitions so that Council will have a summary of information heard over the last month.

Vice Mayor Curtis thanked Laura for the presentation and the analysis, and stated she read the petitions, posts on Facebook and what was in the paper. Vice Mayor Curtis stated that even though it was very clear to Council, the committee and staff that there was a connection between the naming of the bridge for Dr. King and Freedom's Fort, it obviously wasn't that clear to everyone. She noted that it is important for the public to understand that this was not a process of naming the bridge but locating an appropriate structure to name after Dr. King. To take the accomplishment away from those who have worked so hard and have waited patiently for years would be hurtful and disrespectful of the process. Vice Mayor Curtis moved that Council modify the name of the MLK Memorial Bridge to the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Bridge in honor of Frank Baker, Shepard Mallory and James Townsend.

Councilman Tuck asked for discussion prior to the vote and Mayor Wallace stated that discussion would take place after the vote.

Councilman Tuck stated that he does not think that is the appropriate way to proceed.

City Attorney Valdejuli stated that discussion may take place before the vote and Mayor Wallace has called on Councilman Hobbs to begin the discussion.



Councilman Hobbs, Councilwoman Schmidt, Councilwoman Snead, Councilman Moffett and Mayor Wallace stated their reasons for support of the resolution and Councilman Tuck voiced his thoughts, stating the appropriate way to handle the issue is to listen to the citizens prior to the vote.

Councilman Moffett stated he feels it would be disingenuous to hear what the citizens have to say when Council has already made the decision and that we have taken the appropriate matter.

Councilman Tuck stated that he first heard of the compromise last Wednesday and does not want it to seem that he was a part of knowing, prior to this morning, the direction of Council's action.

Councilwoman Snead stated that Council had already voted but after hearing the concerns of the citizens tried to make a compromise.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Curtis, seconded by Councilmember Moffett that the resolution be approved as read. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 6 - Vice Mayor Curtis, Councilmember Hobbs, Councilmember Moffett, Councilmember Schmidt, Councilmember Snead and Mayor Wallace

**Nay:** 1 - Councilmember Tuck

## **MISCELLANEOUS NEW BUSINESS**

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mayor Wallace opened the Public Comment period. Ms. Glass read the protocol for the Public Comment session.

Rev. Browlee Hailstock, Jr. Pastor Emeritus of the Zion Baptist Church in the Phoebus section of the City, greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: I am also the president of the Peninsula Pastor's Council (PPC). I am here tonight representing the PPC in support of the citizen committee's recommendation to this august body to name the Mercury Boulevard Bridge that connects the Phoebus community and Fort Monroe the

Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Bridge which Council voted unanimously seven - zero in support of this recommendation. The PPC not only sees this bridge as a connector of these two Peninsula communities but as a strong symbol of Dr. King's philosophy of connecting people. Bridging the divide, bringing people together in a symphony of brother and sisterhood and a symbol is not a sign for there is a distinct difference between a sign and a symbol. A sign simply points to a reality and that is the extent of its function. But a symbol not only points to a reality it participates in the reality to which it points. It engages in that which it suggests. Dr. King not only pointed to the life of love and togetherness for all of us but he also participated in an attempt to bring it to reality. So much so he gave his life for it. Even until this day his love and incisive desire is to bridge the divide in our hearts and minds and the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Bridge is a symbol that will keep us ever reminded of bridging the divide connecting us, bringing us together in love. I think this bridge ought not be politicized. I think this great man ought to be recognized. We, the PPC, strongly support the naming of this expanse the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Bridge. Amen.

Mayor Wallace stated he wanted to point out in case it was not heard or understood or contemplated that there are going to be two monuments recognizing and acknowledging Dr. King and his exploits. One is going to be associated with the individuals at the Fort who reflected or at least laid the foundation for his work and what he did in terms of bridging connections between people. We are also going to have another monument in the proximity of the Coliseum - Hampton Convention Center area to be reflective of his accomplishments and what he is noted for in conjunction with people who reflected those same values who happen to be residents of Hampton. So it is not going to be one but two mediums recognizing and endorsing the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I just want to be sure that is explicitly understood.

Ms. Gaylene Kanoyton greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: I had some written comments that I was going to say but I think I will speak from the heart. You know in the past couple of weeks I have read posts, social media and notice what is going on nationally and it really hurts me to see it filtering into our City now. You know when a group of people speak up, you notice angry people, when a civil rights group speaks up it becomes divisive and we are all in it for the same thing. It is not a racial thing

with us and I don't think it is a racial issue with the other group as well, it's not. But I will say this, we are not a black City, we are not a white City, we are Hampton City, we are one city and that is who we are. I do know that it is within the purview of City Council to name bridges and streets without public comment. I know that in the past we had bridges and streets named and no one complained. If you start having public comment when streets, bridges and everything is named then you need to change the code because that is within your purview. Now I am personally agreeing with the new name of the bridge or the enhanced name of the bridge, I know that Martin Luther King said in his "I Have a Dream Speech" that I will paraphrase that he dreamt that one day that little white girls and little white boys could walk hand in hand across the bridge. Back in the 16th, 17th and 18th century and even up to the 60's or 70's you couldn't even do that and now they can. They can walk across the bridge together, hand and hand and we have children in the audience that we need to represent well. You know to be able to walk across a bridge that Martin Luther King and you had your three slaves that represented one spectrum to the other spectrum and walked to Freedom Fortress is something that we should celebrate and be grateful for. There are lots of opportunities in this City to name other things and people can put their input in but I think that the organization and the committee that did the work and the research in the long term and Lillie Mae Jones and I know Rudy Langford was on this, bless his heart, he was very much, very much in favor of the Martin Luther King Bridge. So with that being said, you know this is not political we got leaders that have been saying some wrong things of people, mixing things up and we are only going to deal with the facts and what the law is. Thank you.

Ms. Angela Rich greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: I want to thank you and do appreciate all the time you have spent on this. Forgive me I am a little nervous, I am not usually a public speaker unlike some folks that are very well versed. Forgive me. I do love the fact that you have come up with a way to try to come together and love the fact you have deliberated over this. However, I think somewhere in there the point behind the petition was that we wanted it true to the history of Hampton and to somebody who actually put boots on the ground at Fort Monroe, that actually had some doing with Fort Monroe and we do know and we do believe absolutely that Martin Luther King should be recognized in our community. Our community is a vision of a diverse community, Hampton

University, good for them for going to the NAACP, the Blues Kids we've got Black Cat Bobby, we got such a diverse wonderful community and we should embrace that. We never knew that there was an option for this bridge to be named and Fort Monroe having such a rich military history, I feel like it is a dishonor not to honor something individually from the history of Fort Monroe. Now I know that a lot of time it seems it was vetted on our online petition however, that is just a portion of our petition signatures. We have over two thousand signatures in total; we have over eight hundred in person signatures that are almost one hundred percent from Hampton residents. There are a few, we did open up to some Newport News and some other folks being that it seems a lot of folks on the committee also not from Hampton that had a voice so we felt like we should be able to open it up to everybody that had a voice in this. Especially that Fort Monroe was a military community; there are a lot of folks that kinda hold that as their hometown even though it's not their hometown. So forgive me for seeming a little upset, I just thought that we would come to a better resolution. I thought with honoring him, I feel like we have already done quite a bit of honoring him in our community and I felt like this is an area that should be honored to Fort Monroe and military history and our civil history. Thank you for your time, I really appreciate it.

Ms. Kimberly Vaughn greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: I am here to present our petition if you would like to see it, I have our online and the signatures. I am actually the history side of it and Angela is the kinder one. I am going to read mine more. Fort Monroe received its name in 1834 and was occupied by the Army until 2011. Citizens including myself thought the bridge was named Fort Monroe as you can see by our petition with over two thousand signatures and it can be out of city because it is a National Monument and by their comments citizens were not aware that this bridge was unnamed and being looked at to be named. We were given no opportunity for public discussion before the City Council voted, as we first learned about this vote through the Daily Press article after the City Council had voted. We do not believe this was fair and just. Dr. Martin Luther King was a great man and his legacy should be continued in the City of Hampton; however, this bridge is the main entrance to historic Fort Monroe and has over four hundred years of history attached to both sides. In 1960, the Fort Monroe peninsula was designated a National Historic Landmark and listed on the National Register of Historic places. In 2011, Fort Monroe was

declared a National Monument, Fort Monroe's history spans an American story from the 1600's to 21st century. 1600's - American Indians, Captain John Smith, Fort Algonguin, Old Point Comfort, 1700's Fort George built destroyed by a hurricane, 1800's Old Point Comfort light, oldest active lighthouse on the Chesapeake Bay today, the War of 1812, Edgar Allan Poe, Fort Monroe was built, the largest stone fort ever built in America; Civil War, Contrabands of war, General Benjamin Butler frees slaves, Emancipation Proclamation, Freedom Fortress, the USS Monitor and the CSS Virginia fought their epic battle within view of this Fort; 1900's the Chamberlain Hotel built and stands as a reminder of Old Point Comfort's resort history today; World War II, a submarine net was strung across the main Hampton Roads channel from Fort Monroe to Willoughby to catch any U-boats and the US Army Headquarters for Training and Doctrine Command until 2011. From 1829 to 1962 fourteen presidents visited Fort Monroe. As the main entrance to Fort Monroe with over four hundred years of history this bridge should be named within the history of Fort Monroe not outside of it. Fort Monroe was a national historic landmark on the National Register of places and a National Monument. This after the past tense of it, we would have requested that the City Council reconsider the name of the bridge, have a public discussion with citizen input and keep it within the history of Fort Monroe. Thank you for your time and it is probably too late.

Mr. Edward Sean Robinson greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: I am a fourth year undergrad student at Hampton University, I am also an Army veteran. During my time in the Army I had the opportunity to serve with great soldiers and I learned that it is real important to lead by example. Integrity is also very important which is why I think we should give City Council some credit, they are very fair and they are very – they take their job seriously. What I am saying is they were out here, Councilwoman Schmidt, Councilwoman Snead and Mayor Wallace were out there picking up litter with me at Bethel High School on March 18th. I mean out there cleaning the community, this is the movement we are trying to – we are out here arguing about the bridge but there is a movement going on where we are trying to perpetuate unity here and I think that's what is most important. There is research, if you guys are familiar with the broken windows theory; there is research that actually says that unmaintained areas are actually the areas where criminality is focused, where it happens the most. So right now what our Council is doing, our Council is spearheading

the effort along with the Clean City Commission to address this and make our City safe and clean. While we are sitting up disagreeing over this bridge I think we should be more focused on making our community safe and clean. Because I know you guys saw the article in the Daily Press about how many offenses are coming into the City, how many offenses are taking place but people are not actually getting consequences based off of that. So I think we need to focus on picking up some of this litter in the City and also come out to the Walk Hampton Clean Event happening April 22nd and the 23rd. Email [hccc@hampton.gov](mailto:hccc@hampton.gov) if you would like to register and would like to participate. Thank you.

Ms. Lorraine Beckwith greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: Thank you Mayor – thank you Council and to all of the citizens here. I live in Hampton and I worked at Fort Monroe for over fifteen years. I understand and I appreciate the background that you gave on all signatures and the diversity of the population percentages that gave – that counted and didn't count but when you got to the two hundred and nine signatures you just said it was two hundred and nine signatures and I wonder how many of those in the percentages were in there. For me I worked fourteen-fifteen plus years at Fort Monroe. My late husband, who was black by the way, also worked at Fort Monroe. He worked there twenty years, he served on the Hampton Military Affairs Committee. I worked with those who were the soldiers, the veterans and family members of the Vietnam Era in itself. I am not taking anything away from Dr. Martin Luther King but you know he spoke out against the Vietnam War. But yet many of the blacks, the whites, the Asians, the Indians who served in the Vietnam War and wearing the military uniform came back. Many of them worked at Fort Monroe. I served proudly with them as a civil servant and I just ask you, I know that you have already voted, but I agree with Councilmember Tuck in that we should have had a discussion on all of that prior to the vote and to rethink the way it was processed. Roberts Rules of Order say you have a motion you have a second you have a discussion then you have a vote. I just ask you to reconsider; there are other bridges in Hampton. I recommend using the bridge that goes from the VA Hospital over to Phoebus. That is a perfect thing to bridge the gap. Use that bridge as the name for that and use the bridge going to Fort Monroe in honor of Fort Monroe. Thank you.

Ms. Trish Proper greeted those on the dais and made the following

comments: I grew up in Phoebus and I was around when Martin Luther King died and we never had the black and white thing going on. We were just big families all poor and we all played together and we all went down to the Mercury Bridge to go crabbing. I thought it was Mercury Bridge, I thought that was the name of it. I thought that from the Sea to the Stars Mercury was the project that NASA did and all our bridges were named after the astronauts and I didn't even know that it was even not named. I thought a hurricane took the sign out so I would really like you to reconsider and go with Fort Monroe and its history and past. Because Phoebus is a great little town and we don't need all this arguing. Thank you.

Mr. Tom Hite greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: I am a resident of Phoebus. I am a little disappointed with the way things went here this evening and I have to agree with what Ms. Vaughan said and these others. I am going to touch on a couple of points real quick and I am out of here. You know we have many bridges in this area here and as a matter of fact several of them are named after the original astronauts of our space program for this country. But moving on to a backup on a little more history, when Benjamin Butler left the military he reentered politics and with Senator Sumner he enacted the Civil Rights Bill of 1875 which was the final act of reconstruction that gave the African American citizens the right of public accommodations such as hotels, restaurants and public entertainment. That being said this was the groundwork for the great work that Martin Luther King did during the 60's in which I came from that era. I saw the sit-ins at Woolworth and the disruption in this country. But he was a man of peace, he was a man of God and this is what our country in built on and it is built on a rule of law in how proceedings are handled. That being the circle completed when Benjamin Butler started the safety of these three slaves, run-away slaves, and it culminated with Martin Luther King sitting beside President Johnson in the 1960's signing the Civil Rights Act. I was disappointed there was not more major notification through the newspapers, a lot of people do not have internet or TV ads and then to see the discrepancy of numbers of the people that were appointed by the committee here that went out and did their due diligence of a hundred and thirty-two names that they got. But then we come up with this, once the public was notified there was an uprising and the way to handle things of this in the future, narrow down what they bring you and put it on a public referendum and let the majority, we the people speak. Thank you.

Mr. Samuel Cutler greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: I am delighted to be here. I want to commend you on being a good visionary for the City of Hampton. Doing a great and marvelous job and your Council that supports you are doing a job. A good leader can't do anything good unless he's got some good followers. I want to say that they have been good followers and on that note I say naming the bridge Dr. Martin Luther King is a good idea because there is a spirit at Fort Monroe where the slaves landed. They said in the history books 1619 Jamestown but I believe you can bring it a little closer to Fort Monroe I think by naming the bridge Dr. Martin Luther King and friends of the slaves I think there can be a spirit of fellowship on that bridge. I think there can be some hallelujahs on that bridge, I think there can be some thank you Jesus on that bridge, someone might even get a dance in on that bridge. But what I say to you, you are doing a great job and I think we have to learn how not to be so anxious to defend or reject something the City Council does. You vote them in, support them, don't try and beat them up. They are doing a good job and also the "word" teaches that let your conversation be yea or nay, either you say yes or no your word is your bond. You got to stand on your word you can't back your word up then you are not much of a good Councilman. So I say you have a good evening and may the Lord smile upon you.

Ms. Lillie Mae Jones greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: I have been a lifetime resident of Phoebus like eighty-five years and I am really surprised by the reaction that came by the bridge being named Dr. Martin Luther King because as she said we all interact with each other. I am very proud I was also on the committee meeting of the committee and anyone who was here from the Citizen Committee would you please stand, who worked with this. Okay, thank you. The other members of the committee if they are not here I won't go over what we did because that was repeated in the first minute. But we are very proud to select the bridge leading into Fort Monroe as the place affixed to the name of Dr. King as a historical era that has played a leading role in evolutionizing our wonderful country. The same can be said of our historical leader Dr. Martin Luther King. When we look over Dr. King's life you will note that our choice of bridge is not the first time Dr. King's name has been attached to a controversy surrounding a bridge. According to the National Park Service website Dr. King lead the Selma March for voting rights. In 1963 on March



7th, later called the bloody Sunday, law efforts officers beat six hundred civil rights workers to get as far as the top of the Edmund Pettus Bridge, in their quest to get from Selma to the state capital in Montgomery. Two days later Dr. King led a symbolic march on the bridge. Later on March 21st Dr. King civil rights activists walked their route to Montgomery on the protection of a court order and federal law enforcement. Like them now we will overcome.

Terrie Viars signed up but was not present to speak.

Ms. Melanie Fluet greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: I am a lifetime resident of Hampton as were my ancestors, they were lifetime residents of Old Point Comfort. I also did my research on Fort Monroe and what the significance was and I found Benjamin Butler also was one who in my opinion for Hampton started the movement to free slaves. To give them an education, I read on Hampton University's webpage that he started the school at Hampton University, I may be wrong, but that's what I read on their web page. We are rich with history in Hampton, we are very rich with history. Unlike other cities we crossed that racial divide in the beginning and I am proud of that history, I also want to thank you all for coming to a compromise. I think that was very nice and great for us and I appreciate it and obviously I am a little nervous but thank you very much.

Ms. Catherine Clark greeted those on the dais and made the following comment: I am a little aggravated right now; I did come here as a lifetime Virginia resident of Hampton, grew up in Fort Monroe. I really felt like Fort Monroe (the bridge) should have been named Fort Monroe or something with Fort Monroe. I have all the respect in the world for Martin Luther King, felt there would have been better bridges to find 'em a nice place to be named. What upsets me is apparently this committee has been together since 2009 and it is 2016 to name something with Martin Luther King. Explain to me why it took that long, I mean that's an extremely long time and the second thing that has got me really upset and I am sorry, is the arrogance of a couple of the Councilmembers and the Mayor are showing disrespect to us sitting out there that you don't want to hear our voice. So thank you for my wasted evening.

Ms. Mendel Williams greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: I am a transplant to this area. I had an art studio in Phoebus for

about two and half years and one day I saw the ghosts of the slaves run across the wall and I said damn, oh excuse me. Where the hell am I, okay excuse me and my thing is I think it is more than a Hampton consideration, you are the keepers of a legacy that represents not only the United States but the entire world. Because I would not be here if it hadn't been for the things that had happened at Fort Monroe and I know it's a bother to certain people in certain factions of the, I don't know what the label is, African American community that we have a difference of opinion but sometimes the word compromise is dangerous, because when you come to democracy and you decide on behalf of everyone and you have called it compromise and you eclipse the voices, the visibility of other people's emotions, feelings and their point of view, you in effect are not having a democracy anymore and that is very dangerous. I think you can be very creative, you could call it the bridge of names; I mean why are you are so stuck in the mud. You've got the Dr. Martin Luther King thing and that's wonderful but we have never had something that is related to African American women that suffered like Mary Peake and all those people, their voices, their visibility is not seen and I think it is very arrogant, as the young lady just said, to ask people to come to give their opinion, to give their point of view and say well since we are the ones that know what is right for you we have already decided, so if you need to breath then use words while you are breathing and go ahead and present it and I think it is important that it is not bad for people to disagree, that is what is marvelous about this country. To have different points of view is what makes it a great nation and for you to infer that some people work so hard, that is what the rest of us are doing. We were not invited to the table, we were not invited to be on the committee but we are doing the things in the community to help improve it in so many ways. So my suggestion is get out of this habit of having a few people, using the old guards, deciding what is right for all of us because we are not children. Have a platform, town hall meetings, City meetings because this area is so prominent in the history of the entire United States so you have the responsibility as stewards not to do superficial things like saying okay we need a place for Martin Luther King. Granted he is a great person but the history of African Americans is not a one-note story, there is so much more that needs to be told. If we are going to talk about the coming together of people for me to say I disagree with you for it then to be inferred that I am being difficult is an insult. For you to say why did you disagree with me, how can we come together so that your voices are not only heard but our representation values you. Thank you very much.

Ms. Billie Einselen greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: I live in; however, I am here to bring to you a statement from a friend, Mrs. Betty Alexander, who some of you may know who lived in Hampton for decades and is now a resident of Chesapeake and could not be here this evening. A history buff, she was a longtime supporter of the Hampton History Museum and the history efforts in our area as well as being a volunteer until her move to Chesapeake. This is her brief statement: While there are many notable names that have been suggested for the bridge to Fortress Monroe, history clearly shows that it should be called the Freedom Bridge. In 1861, when three runaway local slaves escaping bondage sought the protection of Union General Benjamin Butler he refused to release them to their owner. He classified the runaways as contraband of war and utilized them as workers. Learning of this, other escaping slaves during the conflict on the Peninsula crossed over the bridge to Freedom's Fort. May God bless the Fort Monroe Freedom Bridge. Thank you.

Mr. Craig Wapples greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: I am here to speak on behalf of Youth of Virginia in Hampton. I would just like to say that this bridge should be a symbol of hope, it doesn't matter whose name it is in. I care about Martin Luther King's name because we don't have really that much, we don't talk about black history or pretty much history of a junior in school anymore. Like the whole month of February, we didn't have anything to do with black history. They said something in the announcements about someone being famous but I never really got the details and I am scared that if we stop doing that we going to stop talking about black history. If we do not name this bridge after Martin Luther King, then no one will know anything about him in the future. My kids and my kids' kids, will they know about Martin Luther King? Would other children of the City of Hampton know about Martin Luther King? Thank you.

Mr. Joseph Rodriguez greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: A bridge is designed to close physical obstacles without closing the way much like Martin Luther King, Jr. always thought that we should close gaps between all people and get along. I support the naming of the bridge because the meaning fits quite well. Thank you.

Mr. John Krulis greeted those on the dais and made the following comment:

The angry old man who was intending to talk about Chesapeake Avenue will delay that for a minute, or another time. I came to thank you for your vote on the extension of the exemption for the elderly and disabled and I thank you for something else but I forgot what it was. I was here when you voted for the Dr. Martin Luther King naming of that bridge and I was damn proud and as an angry old white man I was damn proud to have that done. Absolutely one hundred percent and I will tell you this, I don't know who those twelve hundred people are who are addressing you and telling you to reverse what you did but I can almost bet you one hundred percent that your naming them with these additional names is not going to please them nor is it what they wanted. You know that damn well they wanted you to take the name of Martin Luther King off of it. Now you are not going to appease them by adding a few more names. You are going to appease a few people of course but you are not going to appease the people who were behind that petition, no way, and if you can be swayed by twelve hundred people, can I get twelve hundred people to rename Pine Chapel in honor of Mr. Frank Ottofarro. I'll do it, I'll do it between now and next month if you will do it and if that doesn't work I'm gonna ask for a petition to rename Chesapeake Avenue the Boulevard of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I was proud to be here folks when that naming was done and I ain't so proud today.

Mr. Andrew Shannon greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: Since I have three minutes I promised Major Gallop that he wasn't going to have to escort me out. Someone said that those are just young children; well I represent the organization founded by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I said I represent the organization. Dr. King lived and died for freedom, justice and equality so what I am doing is showing you how we got the name of Dr. King named in Newport News. You all, it was the children, they listened to the children, the voices of the children, and so all we are asking you to do is listen to the voices of the children. We had a press conference and one of the young men, I think this is one of them right here, who spoke at the press conference – he said we want to honor Dr. King because he helped people. He loved people, he is known nationally and internationally for love and someone said well you know Dr. King was against the war. He was for peace; he was for peace we don't make no excuses for what Dr. King stood for... freedom, justice and equality. So I am here, someone said why are you here, I am here to honor and to thank, see you don't understand we generally march against the Council we just generally

protest against the Council. We are here tonight to say thank you. That's why we are here. You say, why are you here – I am here to say thank you Billy, Councilman Hobbs; I am here to say thank you Teresa – Councilman Schmidt; thank you Chris – Councilwoman Snead; thank you Will Moffett, you are a freedom fighter that's right – he is a freedom fighter he's SCLC – go tell somebody; thank you Councilman Moffett; we are here for Donnie Tuck – Councilman Tuck told me what not to talk about today so I am not going to talk about Robert E. Lee school, I am not going to talk about , what's that other school, Armstrong – named after Jefferson Davis, I ain't gonna talk about that tonight Donnie. I am just going to say thank you. Thank you Vice Mayor Curtis, thank you and the Mayor – thank you Mayor it takes courage, it takes courage in the heat of hostility and opposition to do what you are doing. So we ain't afraid of we gonna be escorted out or the time is going to run out before I said thank you and to the Mayor Bunting I want to say thank you and to all the members of Council so these children this is diversity this is why the bridge was named after Dr. King look at the diversity they were on the bridge. Thank you. Thank you. Let me tell you something we didn't come this far for nobody to tell me to sit down. So don't ever form your mouth to tell Andrew Shannon to sit down. Thank you Council, we love you, God bless you and you too. We got something for ya. Cause it was nine hundred people assembled at Hampton University this weekend remembering King and they all want you to know they say thank you. Bye Bye.

Mr. Charles Hope greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: I can remember going to the public schools in Hampton and the motto was First from the Sea First to the Stars. I can remember the City Council honored an esteemed gentleman named Hardy Cash, who gave his life of work for the City of Hampton. They took a stretch of land that was over one half of a mile and renamed it for him because of what he did. If we actually take the time and go into Dr. King's closet we will see the shoes that he wore. If you take them from heel to toe, heel to toe, it would certainly out stretch the 8.6 mile stretch of road that is Mercury Blvd. I suggested that the City Council become the first major city, remember First from the Sea – First to the Stars, to name a major stretch of road after Dr. King – Mercury Boulevard. But you know if you are scared just say you are scared and we will, the citizens who voted to put you where you are and the freedoms he stood up for. He died for that, he died to give us the right to vote to put you

where you are. We will forgive you because God is love, God bless you.

Ms. Sandra Canepa greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: I live in Hampton and surprisingly enough I am not here to talk about the bridge naming or Mercury Boulevard but I could not sit here and listen to everything being said and all the resolutions and the cancellations and the arguments and what have you, or not arguments but the oppositions of everybody without saying I think the best one tonight was the one made by Mrs. Alexander, I think the bridge should be named Freedom's Bridge and take names out of it. I think Dr. Martin Luther King would agree that that bridge led to freedom for a lot of people not just for the few that are living today. Thank you and anyway let me go on with my remarks tonight about Fort Monroe's Wherry Quarter. I want to make them short. At the next City Council meeting the Planning Commission is going to present for Council's approval the Commission's proposed zoning plan for Fort Monroe which includes an amendment to remove residential housing from Wherry Quarter. My purpose tonight is to request Council approve the proposed zoning plan with its amendment when it comes before you for a vote on April 13th. It was thrilling to read in last Friday's Daily Press that the Fort Monroe Authority at their retreat voted to transfer some Wherry land along its eastern edge to the National Park Service. That was terrific; however, the amount of land being transferred comprises only a small part of Wherry Quarter. therefore, it is important to point out tonight that the zoning plan being recommended for approval by the Planning Commission remains important, too, and I understand the National Park Service could add more Wherry Quarter parcels of land to the east Wherry track that last Thursday was voted to be transferred to the National Park Service. City Council's actions speak loudly; therefore, Council's approval of the zoning plan will indicate to Richmond that Hampton is fully behind Governor Terry McAuliffe and Secretary Molly Ward in their continued commitment to unify the Fort Monroe National Monument. Thank you.

Mr. Johnnie Carroll greeted those on the dais and made the following : If it is my understanding to the question, why should a bridge to Fort Monroe be named Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Bridge? My answer would be placed this way, my brothers and sisters it is true that Fort Monroe has been deactivated and will no longer see potential future conflicts. However, there is a conflict that remains unresolved in this nation. It is a conflict for the sole

identity of this nation that has no geographical boundaries; it is a conflict that exists in the hearts, souls and minds of all of us. And every conflict will have its soldiers. Dr. King was such a soldier, he was one who believed that this country would one day, some day live to the promise not a paradigm that all men and women in this country were created equal. Now I am going to go off the cuff for a second because we all know that Dr. King went for civil rights for voting and just now if I'm not mistaken you passed a resolution, but none of the citizens in here had a chance to vote. He fought for that for me, for you, for all of us to have a chance to have a decision and that decision was made without our input. How can I as a veteran, how can anyone of us sit down there and just turn our backs and say we are going to move forward but then take that step back. If we are going to build a bridge, build it. Have that foundation now so that foundation will be strong in the future to support and carry the dreams that are supposed to be for this nation. Thank you.

Mr. Reynold Walbrook signed up but was not present to speak.

Mayor Wallace noted that there was a citizen who had fallen in the rear of the room and is being attended to and he asked that the meeting proceed.

Mr. Bill Thomas greeted those on the dais and made the following comments. I sat through most of the discussion today and I was at a City Council meeting some time ago and what I had mentioned was that at my age now and getting older and hopefully more useful that we really need to thank the Council for really thinking through this. I think it could have been something more than what it's worth, my issue was reading the papers and doing some other things were saying – were why are we here tonight, why is this an issue. After all these years honoring a good man who did good things for America, who if he wasn't around at the time America would be torn apart. Dr. King stood in the bridge and he helped us understand that regardless of what your skin color was, that we reflect on who we were as Americas. We can all come here saying you guys are not doing a good job and we can throw rocks and applaud you for what you are doing but I think it's more important to come to some kind of legitimate compromise. We people can take time to think things through and my good friend Linda Curtis, whom I have known for so, so many years she has always done that. Just a couple of corrections, Samuel Chapman Armstrong started Hampton University. Martin Luther King was not against the soldiers in the field in Vietnam he was

against the violence and he was also very much against the large numbers of African Americans who were being lost in that war. I come from a military family and my brother and my cousins and my father – all of us, that is what we did – we served. Not because we wanted to or had to but because we knew it was the right thing to do. But at the end of the day, I wish those would have another conversation, I would like to join you with it, as to why are we here. We are honoring a man who did a tremendous amount of good and I think anytime that we can do that and if there are other agendas, or course there will be other things going around, but if you had people – the Council has its responsibilities I have known about this committee and working on this thing for years and we as citizens have individual responsibilities to step up to the plate and get involved and get engaged. It is easy to come here tonight and say well I didn't know anything about it. You didn't know anything about it because you really did not take an interest in it. So what I am saying is the fact that the more we communicate and leave this meeting with that sense of communication. Hampton University thought the bridge should be named Martin Luther King Bridge, so what City Council does we have to effectively take your leadership and I just want to applaud you folks for doing that. You took an issue and you made it a good issue. Thank you so very much for the good work you are doing for the citizens of Hampton.

Mr. Claude Vann, III greeted those on the dais and made the following comments: I came tonight primarily just to hear other people's views. Certainly depending on where you were at the time of Dr. King's actions, it had a profound impact upon you. As a military brat I traveled across the country and saw how Dr. King kinda unified people and the fact that I became a soldier and I understand the impact he had on other soldiers. I am very, very, attuned to what is going on in our country today and I don't like what I see. Two weeks ago, on Friday I sat in front of the TV and watched probably something that brought me to the brink of tears and that unification that Martin Luther King had brought had disappeared. Some of the things I am seeing in the media are very disturbing and we need to come together. Certainly I enjoyed and Laura thank you for the information I did not know the names of the three slaves... I do know them now. I learned something from each member who got in front for me to better understand how you feel about the situation. I personally, and I am sure everyone in this room has their own opinion; my opinion is I support and I like the modifications that were made. I



think that there is a place for everyone's views and am very grateful for those who got up and shared their comments with the group. It certainly perked my ears up, I don't know everything but certainly I am still learning. But I thank you for the opportunity to come before you; I support the adjustments that have been made. I think Martin Luther King represents somebody in, he came to Hampton University several times, I am sure in that time frame he made it over to Fort Monroe. I cannot say for sure, I wasn't there but I am pretty sure he made it over there and understood what that Fort meant to America. I am proud to be that American that has served abroad and protected this country and the fact that each and every one of you have the right to say what is on your mind. I appreciate the opportunity to speak mine.

There being no further comments, Mayor Wallace closed the Public Comment period.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

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Donnie R. Tuck  
Mayor

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Katherine K. Glass, CMC  
Clerk of Council

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