



City of Hampton

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

Council Approved Minutes - Final City Council Work Session

Mayor Donnie R. Tuck
Vice Mayor Jimmy Gray
Councilmember Chris L. Bowman
Councilmember Eleanor Weston Brown
Councilmember Steven L. Brown
Councilmember Billy Hobbs
Councilmember Chris Snead

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

Wednesday, May 26, 2021

1:00 PM

**Community
Development
Conference Room, 5th
Floor, City Hall**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Tuck called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. All members of the City Council were present.

Present 7 - Councilmember Chris L. Bowman, Councilmember Eleanor Weston Brown, Councilmember Steven L. Brown, Vice Mayor Jimmy Gray, Councilmember Billy Hobbs, Councilmember Chris Snead, and Mayor Donnie R. Tuck

DONNIE R. TUCK PRESIDED

AGENDA

1. [21-0141](#) Briefing on High Performance Organization

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

Prior to this item, Mayor Tuck welcomed the new Chief of Police, Mark Talbot. Chief Talbot made a few remarks and thanked Council for welcoming him to Hampton.

City Manager Mary Bunting provided background information on High Performance Organization (HPO). She described HPO as bringing out the best of everyone by bringing their efforts in alignment with the organization toward the goals and chief objectives of the Council and community. Ms. Bunting stated that Nancy Olivo, Organization Performance Manager, is familiar with HPO work through her experience with the City of Norfolk and the City of Suffolk and will provide detailed

information and training through her presentation with examples provided by City Attorney, Cheran Cordell Ivery, and Fire Chief, Jason Monk.

Ms. Bunting began the presentation sharing why HPO is important stating the importance of creating a culture of empowerment for employees to bring their best selves to the workforce.

Ms. Olivo defined HPO. This definition is shown on the slide presentation. She also provided an overview of the status of HPO in Hampton and described the strategies and tools used through HPO to improve the organization. There is a focus to make sure that the City meets the definition of high performance and ensure that the strategic leadership work of the organization gets done. The plan is to create leaders at every level by engaging the entire workforce.

Ms. Olivo reviewed the diagnostic questions used to assess the overall health of the organization: where are we going, how do we get there, what culture propels us, and how do we work together. She noted that the most important component of HPO is teams because they make improvements in performance.

Ms. Olivo explained the HPO Model and “change levers” for improving performance. She described the areas of work to focus on for improvements and noted that the assessment determines where the work begins within an organization. She also pointed out that organizations are impacted by the external environment and therefore adjustments have to be made.

Ms. Olivo shared the citywide timeline of HPO beginning in January 2018 at a three day training for department heads and City Manager’s office staff. Although the progress of the timeline was effected by COVID-19, training classes and teams were created to continue the development of HPO. She shared that a few slides of the presentation will further expound on the timeline.

Ms. Olivo described the use of teams as doing the strategic work of leadership that will build the capacity of the organization and improve it. Leadership teams focus on overall performance and microbusiness teams focus on systems and processes.

Ms. Olivo compared the formal hierarchy to the parallel organization stating that formal hierarchy gets short-term work done focusing on near-term tasks, management, and implementation by quickly responding to concerns of citizens dealing with problems. Based on the HPO theorist, organizations need a separate parallel space to look at improving the organization, for example an executive management team, department leadership team and microbusiness teams.

Ms. Olivo showed a video, Turn the Ship Around, by Steven Covey. The video was based on submarine captain, David Marquet, who figured if he gave good orders everything would work out. His story was based on turning followers into leaders and creating leaders at every level. This video is used in trainings to help people overcome their challenges.

After the video, Ms. Olivo discussed the focus of HPO work in Hampton: enhancing the work culture, improving systems and processes, and connecting the workforce to Council's strategic priorities.

Ms. Olivo described an engaged employee and mentioned that only 32% of local government employees are fully engaged and that the goal is to encourage full engagement to positively impact the organization. She shared that the most engaged teams have lower absenteeism, higher customer metrics and higher profitability and actively disengaged employees cost the nation about \$500 billion annually. She mentioned that CPS HR Consulting has found that most of the drivers of engagement are controlled by management, leaders and supervisors.

Ms. Olivo reviewed the guiding principles created by Hampton's Executive Management Team. She noted that the guiding principles contain the leadership philosophy and values of the organization. The desire is to embrace excellence through a culture of trust, partnership and innovation and work together to accomplish community goals. She provided an example of a department leadership team using the guiding principles. She noted that phase one of the HPO rollout will display work culture supporting employee engagement and inclusive leadership. It will include group meetings, meetings with managers and supervisors and training sessions on HPO. She showed a photo of the Parks and Recreation department rollout of their HPO.

Ms. Olivo introduced City Attorney, Cheran Cordell Ivery to continue the presentation discussing her experience in implementing HPO within the City Attorney's Office.

Ms. Ivery thanked Ms. Olivo for inviting her to be a part of the presentation. She discussed her experience with HPO as a new department head unsure how to use the program within the role of City Attorney and within the City Attorney's Office. She mentioned that Ms. Olivo helped her to become educated with embracing the HPO principles to organize the office, empower and engage the staff, and work collaboratively to solve problems. The City Attorney's Office expanded their leadership team to include deputies and attorneys to bring more perspectives and skill sets. The main focus was to assess and improve the department by conducting blind surveys and having small focus groups create the office culture, mission, and

value statement. She reported that all 17 members of the office participated in discussing ways to use the guiding principles for further coaching, education, and offering and receiving feedback from all levels throughout the department. She provided examples of inclusive leadership collaborating on internal policy review for teleworking. The policy was rewritten which will not impact service levels, will boost office morale and will be presented at their June 15th office meeting. Another example was soliciting office wide input about capital expenditures which included web cams for every desktop and enhancing employee engagement. Ms. Ivery informed Council that every new employee in the office will attend a one-on-one training with Ms. Olivo for information on office culture, mission and value statements, and reinforce team work.

Ms. Ivery also shared that the City Attorney's Office launched two microbusiness teams including the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) improvement team responsible for selecting FOIA specific software that is available to Hampton citizens through a web portal on the City's website. The City Attorney's Office also created a lunch and learn for staff to explore multiple areas of law. The office was divided into two teams: the litigation team and the development and finance team. Each team had the opportunity to select a topic of interest. The litigation team discussed getting a case ready for trial and how to try a case if all else fails. The development and finance team discussed the essentials of contract drafting.

Ms. Ivery turned the presentation back to Ms. Olivo.

Ms. Olivo transitioned to the second section of the presentation. She described a microbusiness team as a group of employees with knowledge of processes and systems who come together with the goal of making improvements. She stated that one of the important rules is that everyone's voice at the table is the same, regardless of level. There can be a department head in the room with someone at the first level but rank does not matter. She provided additional examples of microbusiness team results implemented in the City.

Ms. Olivo asked Fire Chief, Jason Monk, to share his experience with microbusiness teams.

Chief Monk thanked Ms. Olivo for the invitation to be a part of the process and thanked the City Manager's Office for bringing Ms. Olivo on board to assist with the HPO process. He shared his experiences as an interim Chief and how the HPO process helped him to be less overwhelmed. He displayed the hierarchy of the Fire Department and expressed the importance of the hierarchy that can work with parallel teams to accomplish a goal. There have always been committees in the Fire Department, but someone of higher authority always made the final decisions.

Chief Monk explained how the HPO process was implemented and how it created success in the Fire Department. He recognized areas in need of improvement and fixed them throughout the process resulting in obtaining a new fire vehicle. The department continues to use HPO for recruitment and retention to determine how to hire and keep good people. Ms. Olivo has also worked with lieutenants and captains at Fort Monroe on the HPO process and Chief Monk shared the excitement of the staff. Chief Monk recognized the benefits of microbusiness teams and how to identify Subject Matter Experts (SME).

Chief Monk shared a slide which lists some of the lessons learned from the work of the microbusiness team. He then showed a video clip about Fire Main Battle Tank (MBT) and HAZMAT Quick Response Vehicle (QRV).

Chief Monk described the video as the perfect example of microbusiness team lessons and said that this is what we need to do and how our responses need to change. A vehicle was built to support the lesson and is being used for service at Station #5. As a reward of being part of the project, there was an open spot for one of Hampton's medics to participate in the final inspection.

Ms. Olivo continued the presentation complimenting the examples provided by Chief Monk. For the next few slides, she explained the newest initiative connecting the workforce to Council's strategic priorities and its benefits to create leaders at every level. Last October, seven strategic work planning teams for each priority area worked together to give input on cross-departmental goals, objectives and actions.

Ms. Olivo announced that by June or July, all of the strategic priorities will be complete with recommendations. She also reviewed the next few slides of the presentation which list the next steps that the teams will work on together to accomplish these goals and the benefits of connecting the workforce to Council's strategic priorities.

Ms. Olivo shared that her responsibility as the Organizational Performance Manager is to provide leadership, implement the HPO initiative and develop trust in a relationship with members of the organization to work openly and transparently.

In conclusion, Ms. Olivo asked Council for their support in the effort to develop employees during implementation and create awareness of what is trying to be accomplished through the HPO initiative.

Ms. Olivo opened the floor for questions.

Chief Monk shared his experiences at a Chief Summit held in Richmond and expressed his appreciation for a supportive Council.

Councilman Brown complimented the presentation and shared a succession plan that he did with his staff. He inquired about a component that specifically talks about the outcome of a manager obtaining goals.

Ms. Olivo informed Council that succession planning is one of the systems in place. She also explained the outcomes of HPO organization using performance management as an example suggesting managers could connect personal objectives to the City's internal plan.

Councilwoman Snead suggested incorporating financial incentives in the HPO program. She added her appreciation of the employee's ability to express themselves without retaliation. She believes this format will bring out the leaders within the organization.

Ms. Olivo shared an example from the Parks and Recreation rollout that supported Councilwoman Snead's suggestion.

Councilwoman Snead also suggested allowing employees to take risks toward improving HPO without being punished for mistakes.

Ms. Bunting applauded Chief Monk for the self-reflection during his presentation and acknowledged his growth. She also piggybacked off of Councilwoman Snead's suggestion and commented about the importance of leadership not blaming employees when things do not go as planned and instead learning from mistakes.

Councilman Bowman and Ms. Olivo discussed her role in the HPO program, goals for the next six months, and data implementation.

Ms. Olivo shared that she functions at both the higher and lower level of the program and facilitates the teams to accomplish their mission. She shared the focus for Phase 1 which includes developing work culture, developing strategic work planning teams, aligning current programs and services to recommended goals and objectives, working with the budget team, and continuing to rollout principles throughout the organization.

In response to Councilman Bowman, Ms. Olivo said an administrative support person assists with surveys and crunching numbers using the Likert scale. She acknowledged Management and Systems Analyst, Shelley Harris-Strimaitis, for creating a tool that installed the Likert scale into Excel so that it is not paper based.

The results of the data is used by the department leadership team to focus on what needs to be changed.

Councilwoman Brown thanked Ms. Olivo for the presentation. She stated that Council has sought the goal of the HPO and looks forward to its achievements. She requested Ms. Olivo give an example about organizations that have influenced staff to be more engaged and to provide input on how the improvement is measured.

Ms. Olivo shared that when she worked for the City of Suffolk, she worked with a Human Resources consulting firm that works with organizations to conduct engagement services to determine the unique drivers for that city. Based on results, the management team in Suffolk created interventions to enhance engagement. Employee engagement teams were created in the Police, Social Services and IT departments and as a result of those efforts, engagement improved. She suggested implementing annual informal surveys in the coming years with the goal of ensuring that Hampton is moving in the right direction.

Councilwoman Brown said that following that type of work, she would expect that management will recognize the increase of productivity. Ms. Olivo stated surveys, focus groups, rollout and feedback will reflect the progress of HPO in the organization.

In response to Councilman Bowman's question about an annual employee morale survey in Hampton, Ms. Bunting clarified that has not taken place in Hampton thus far; however, there are plans for that once the HPO rollout is complete.

Councilwoman Snead shared an experience about a similar scenario years ago in Hampton and how employees were more productive when they felt empowered. She emphasized the importance of rewarding employees to increase participation.

Ms. Bunting reminded everyone that Hampton continues to have the Achievement Award Program and no budget request is needed for it. Councilwoman Snead noted that there is a perception in Hampton's workforce that achievement awards are not the norm.

Ms. Bunting explained that Department Heads can request an award for up to one thousand dollars with certain criteria met. A request for an award exceeding one thousand dollars must be signed by the City Manager. Awards are given based on efforts to save money or provide ideas that improve work performance. She suggested providing more accurate supervisory training to make sure new supervisors are exposed to all tools.

Ms. Bunting's comments are as follows:

That's sort of more on the management side of the house than the leadership side, but they certainly interface because you do want to recognize people who are doing a good job with the microbusiness teams. So, as an example, the one we talked about with the unsolicited proposal process. That didn't necessarily save money, but it substantially improved how we communicate with developers as well as how we provide complete clarity for the public to understand how the unsolicited proposal works. So, that one may not be a savings, but never the less we might want to recognize that team. So we have a variety of tools. While I haven't done one for that yet, I have for some others where we were doing rapid turnaround for development projects, and I gave everyone who participated a fifty dollar gift card as a thank you. That was a smaller one because it didn't save money per se, but it was something that people did and we wanted to recognize.

Councilwoman Snead clarified that she was referring to incentives and other things that can be implemented in order to increase employee engagement.

Ms. Bunting noted that it will become more apparent once supervisors are aware of the tool and once people realize that it is a real opportunity. She reiterated that a budget request is not necessary.

Mayor Tuck asked if there were any more questions or observations.

Councilwoman Snead commented that one of the issues in the workforce is that millennials frequently switch jobs and are not concerned with retirement like past generations have been. She asked Ms. Olivo to speak about how this issue has been addressed through the HPO process.

Ms. Olivo expressed the importance of working with departments, Human Resources and millennials to determine their desires. She continued saying that money, work/life balance and continuous growth are important to millennials. She added that oftentimes millennials stay with organizations as long as they are able to continue to learn and grow.

Ms. Bunting suggested in addition to growing horizontally, rewarding this type of growth is important so that employees understand their value. She reported that the Director of Community Development Terry O'Neill and his department will pilot the career progression program.

Robin McCormick of the Marketing Department added that the results of certain studies revealed millennials want to make an impact and a difference. She

suggested involving them in decisions as an incentive to stay invested.

Ms. Bunting shared success with employees returning to the organization based on the opportunity to make an impact.

REGIONAL ISSUES

There were no regional issues.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Bunting introduced Chief Talbot to share his plans for the City.

Chief Talbot spoke about effective leadership and effective policing which is centered on justice and fairness. He expressed the importance of designing operations that deliver while being in the public. He shared that when he takes over a team, he sends a description of who he is, including his workplace values as this structural approach to leadership allows insight to the direction of the organization. He announced that his desire is to create conditions for win-win situations where everyone is accountable and participates in a culture of learning. He also expressed the importance that standards are adjusted in order to reduce suffering and deliver justice and fairness now. He expressed his gratitude to work with the City of Hampton.

Councilman Brown welcomed Chief Talbot and shared his point of reference to good policing as the 21st Century Policing Model. He asked Chief Talbot to share a couple of takeaways in terms of his managing style and his thoughts on community and police.

Chief Talbot stated that the 21st Century Policing Model should be the minimum of what is done. He expressed that there is more to policing than crime and it should be replaced with justice and fairness and made into something that is valuable to everyone. He stated that officer safety and wellness is the only thing that can turn around a community; police officers need to be cared for and provided with the appropriate resources necessary to do their jobs. He closed stating that policing sits on top of adversity that society has created; therefore, leading police must be done where all fundamental concerns are addressed.

Ms. Bunting reaffirmed her excitement of Chief Talbot joining the team.

CLOSED SESSION

2. [21-0154](#) Closed session pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711.A(.8) to consult with legal counsel pertaining to an economic development agreement and a proposed memorandum of understanding with VDOT relative to the I-64 expansion.

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

Aye: 7 - Councilmember Bowman, Councilmember Weston Brown, Councilmember Brown, Vice Mayor Gray, Councilmember Hobbs, Councilmember Snead and Mayor Tuck

CERTIFICATION

Mayor Tuck briefly recessed the meeting from 2:52 p.m. until 3:05 p.m.

3. [21-0155](#) Resolution Certifying Closed Session

At 3:43 p.m., a motion was made by Councilmember Steven Brown and seconded by Councilmember Chris Snead, that this Closed Session - Certification be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Councilmember Bowman, Councilmember Weston Brown, Councilmember Brown, Vice Mayor Gray, Councilmember Hobbs, Councilmember Snead and Mayor Tuck

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:43 p.m.

Contact Info:
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Donnie R. Tuck
Mayor

Katherine K. Glass, CMC
Clerk of Council

Date approved by Council _____