



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 Michelle T. Ferebee
Councilmember Billy Hobbs

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

Wednesday, June 8, 2022

1:00 PM

Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Tuck called the meeting to order at 1 p.m. All members of the City Council were present with Councilwoman Brown arriving just after roll call.

Present 10 - Councilmember Chris L. Bowman, Councilmember Eleanor Weston Brown, Vice Mayor Eleanor Weston Brown, Councilmember Steven L. Brown, Vice Mayor Steven L. Brown, Councilmember Michelle T. Ferebee, Vice Mayor Jimmy Gray, Vice Mayor Jimmy Gray, Councilmember Billy Hobbs, and Mayor Donnie R. Tuck

DONNIE R. TUCK PRESIDED

AGENDA

1. [22-0175](#) 2022 General Assembly Session Recap

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

City Manager Mary Bunting introduced the item and shared that the General Assembly adopted a budget on June 1; however, there may be changes to it since the Governor's response to the budget has not yet been received. She continued saying that we now know the direction in which things are moving, but will continue to wait to see how everything with the budget will be resolved.

Vice President of Two Capitols Consulting Ed Reed greeted those on the dais; noted that he was pleased to share some good news out of the General Assembly as it relates to state finances and moving forward with the two-year budget; and began

providing the recap of the legislative session.

Mr. Reed reviewed the first portion of the slide presentation which recapped the 2022 Regular Session. He spoke a bit about bills SB315, SB149, SB253, SB23, HB729 and HB728 described in the presentation and shared that this was a successful session as the Governor signed off on the first four of these bills. Four additional bills related to some of Council's priorities were also put forth including bills about tree canopies; the definition of gifts; pandemic response studies and health districts; and integrity of buildings across the Commonwealth.

Mr. Reed spoke about the Reconvened Session, also known as the VETO session. Governor Glen Youngkin handed down 26 vetoes on bills and amended approximately 150 bills. All vetoes were upheld or sustained and the General Assembly agreed to most of the amendments. Governor Youngkin vetoed an additional seven bills on May 27 as a result of the VETO session; however, none of them have a true impact on the City of Hampton.

Mr. Reed spoke about Special Session 1. Budget bills are in special session which convened on April 4 and will likely continue until the 2023 regular session begins. Approximately 40 additional bills that were held over from the regular session are in special session and it is unknown when action will take place on those bills. Council will be kept apprised of what takes place. In addition, there are a few bills that impact the City and the appointment of some judges in certain areas of the Commonwealth remain an important issue of the special session.

Mr. Reed transitioned into the portion of the presentation about the state budget. He reviewed the next group of slides which provided information about the state budget related to taxation, public education, health and human resources, natural resources, public safety and veterans, transportation and general government. Also included in the presentation were dollar amounts allocated for the various investments under each category.

Mr. Reed paused to speak about something not included in the conference report, which is the Governor's recent comments about the potential for a suspension of the gas tax. Mr. Reed assured everyone that the consulting firm will keep an eye open regarding that matter.

Mr. Reed also shared that the conference report is a compromise between the House and the Senate on amendments to Governor Northam's introduced budget in December. Much of what is taking place is a compromise between the House, the Senate and the Governor.

Mr. Reed turned the floor over to Vice President of Two Capitols Consulting Elizabeth Parker to provide the overview about public education and health and human resources.

Ms. Parker greeted those on the dais and began sharing information about key areas of the budget. She clarified that all investments shown in the next group of slides come from the general fund unless otherwise noted. These slides provided information and the amounts in the budget for public education compensation; K-12 education funding; school construction; and one of the bigger areas of the budget, health and human resources.

Mayor Tuck asked Ms. Parker to elaborate a bit about the term “Marcus Alert” from the slide presentation.

Ms. Parker explained that during the special session in 2021, the General Assembly allocated dollars for a program involving crisis intervention. This pilot program only applied to a few localities and the General Assembly included additional investment to expand the program further. Marcus Alert is a crisis response to mental care alongside police officers under certain circumstances. The concept is to eliminate certain people, who might be facing a mental health crisis, from having to face police and be served by counselors versus law enforcement.

Mr. Reed returned to the podium to review the remaining slides about the state budget areas including natural resources and commerce/trade; public safety; transportation; and general government.

Mr. Reed reviewed the final two slides of the presentation which highlighted a few miscellaneous items and several Hampton-related items. The Hampton-related items listed include the Virginia Air and Space Science Center; the establishment of the Virginia Community Military Partnership Fund; and Hampton University.

Mr. Reed opened the floor for questions and comments from Council. No questions or comments were posed.

Mayor Tuck thanked Mr. Reed and Ms. Parker for the great work and efforts they do through Two Capitols Consulting.

2. [22-0190](#) Parks Master Plan Update

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

Ms. Bunting introduced the item.

Art Thatcher of BerryDunn greeted those on the dais and began giving the update on the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. He shared that the vision for the City is for the plan to be realistic and aspirational; and to consider redeveloping, reusing, reimaging and repurposing. He also shared the Master Plan process schedule and timeline which began in 2019.

Mr. Thatcher reviewed the next portion of the slide presentation which summarized the ways in which survey information was gathered from those in the community including public engagement, random mailed surveys and an open link survey. This portion of the presentation also provided general information about the survey and summarized the responses from participants. This information was related to priorities expressed at public meetings; survey methodology; the neighborhoods of respondents and the percentages of participation in those neighborhoods; the level of usage at various recreation locations; and the percentages of participants who use various means to access parks and activities including auto, foot, bike and public transit.

The next portion of the presentation that Mr. Thatcher shared provided input from surveyors about future needs for increased use of parks including programs and facilities and physical improvements to parks and other recreational areas; and participants visions and values such as family-friendly facilities and activities, access for all to parks and programs, affordable services and promoting health and wellness.

Mr. Thatcher stated that BerryDunn also took inventory of the City's facilities and their level of service. Some of the findings were that the City should celebrate the water and opportunities to increase views and access; most parks are well-maintained, but need updates; branding needs improvement; some playground structures and courts need updating; there are opportunities to increase American with Disabilities Act (ADA) access; senior citizen communities have outgrown their current spaces; that there is a need to increase standards for diamond fields at schools; and some inconsistencies were found in standards. The complete list of findings is included in the slide presentation.

Vice Mayor Gray asked Mr. Thatcher to speak a bit about the finding which showed that senior citizen communities have outgrown their current spaces.

Mr. Thatcher said that seniors expressed that the senior center is small and that they would like to see more for seniors. He also shared that nationally, communities are moving away from stand-alone centers and instead are incorporating senior and youth activities within neighborhood and community centers. For example, senior activities are held during the day while students are in school and youth activities are

held in the afternoon and evening while younger participants are out of school.

Mr. Thatcher continued with the presentation. He stated that BerryDunn mapped out and took inventory of all components of parks and designed a rating scale to show the results. The next group of slides described the results with mapped images of and percentages of sustainability in parks in the following categories: neighborhood access, walking barriers, walkable access to outdoor recreation and indoor access.

Mr. Thatcher reviewed the recurring themes which helped BerryDunn begin developing goals and objectives moving forward. Some of them include enhancing maintenance of parks and facilities; connecting to the water; reimagining and repurposing existing parks and spaces; creating access to parks and programs; providing family-friendly facilities and activities; making improvements and renovations to existing facilities; promoting outdoor recreation in a natural environment; promoting better safety and security; and installing WiFi connectivity.

Mr. Thatcher turned the floor over to Parks Planner Alison Eubank to present the final portion of the presentation which is being introduced to Council and the public for the first time. This includes recommendations related to top values, goals, and priority timeframe of the work to be done.

Ms. Eubank spoke about each of the five draft overarching goals of the initiative which are to reinvest in infrastructure; improve and enhance programming and outreach; improve organizational operations; increase financial resources; and promote environmental stewardship. Specific objectives and actions for each category are listed in the slide presentation.

Ms. Eubank reiterated that these goals and objectives are in draft form; however, staff will provide Council with an updated document in the near future. She also reviewed the timeline of events in the process. Currently, the process is in the draft recommendation stage. Plans are underway to obtain public input and feedback about whether these goals capture the public's desires for the future of Parks, Recreation and Leisure Services. The final steps will be to bring the plan before the Planning Commission and City Council and to implement the plan.

Ms. Eubank opened the floor for questions and comments from Council.

In response to Mayor Tuck's question about the need to increase standards for diamond fields, Ms. Eubank clarified that refers to baseball diamonds.

Mayor Tuck expressed concern about the portion of the presentation which shows

that the system is dependent on schools for neighborhood level of service. In addition, one graph indicates that there are more schools within a ten minute walk than there are parks in many areas of the City. He asked if a more cooperative agreement between the schools and the City has been taken into consideration with regard to the use of school fields and the need to upgrade them. He also shared a few examples of children recreating outside near elementary schools and people walking animals and walking for exercise in various areas, and asked if the plan involves providing something for adults and kids who are not within a 10 mile walking distance of a park but within 10 minutes walking distance of a school. He asked what could be done to enhance these types of offerings and whether the enhancement is only about the outside or the inside as well. He shared that his initial vision was that parts of schools not utilized during the day could be equipped with a gate giving people access to a portion of the school or gym for activities; however, that may not be an option with school safety concerns on the rise. He again asked what could be done to enhance the experience for individuals who are not close to a park who may want to hold activities in the evening.

Ms. Bunting explained that years ago, the plan was to have neighborhood parks at all elementary schools to ensure that there were opportunities for playground access and other amenities, however, this was geared toward young people; therefore, playgrounds have been enhanced with more than what a school system would have on it's own. She continued saying that the field base opportunities have more middle and high school levels which are not as walkable for everyone. For example, at the Northampton Community Center (as described by the Mayor), there was already a gym for the school, so community space was added so that the gym could be used for the school system during the day and the gym, multipurpose and fitness rooms could be used in the evenings by those in the community. At that time, this was the model for future community centers, however, the West Hampton community asked for something much larger with regard to the Westhampton Community Center, and therefore, the model approach was abandoned.

Ms. Bunting added that Mayor Tuck's inquiry raises the question about re-examining the plan with our school partners in an attempt to mirror the Northampton Community Center at other locations in the City. She also made additional comments about indoor facilities and creating intergenerational opportunities for everyone.

Councilman Brown commended both presenters on the good presentation and piggybacked on Mayor Tuck's comments about various schools that assist with these types of activities. He suggested that an untapped resource for consideration is local churches as they are often underutilized during the week. He also suggested that staff survey clergy about the potential use of their facilities during the week by senior citizens and the youth since most churches are mainly occupied on the

weekends.

Vice Mayor Gray shared some feedback he received from youth in the community about schools being more accessible to young people who live in communities where the need for additional space is so they can walk to a school as opposed to traveling to the closest community center. He also spoke about the need to find ways to open up dead space and make it available to people in the community.

Ms. Bunting referenced the program at Kilgore Gifted Center and shared that she reached out to the School Superintendent about exploring more opportunities, understanding that when buildings are open longer, the result is higher costs to cover things like security and lighting. She continued saying that elementary schools offer the best opportunities for having these types of facilities in walking distance, but do not have the same quality of gyms as high schools, so it is important to keep in mind the challenges associated with all options. She reiterated that the City has a positive relationship with the school system and is respectful of the financial impact that may be on schools, but believes we can work together to create a win-win for the community.

Mayor Tuck ended the meeting on a positive note and congratulated those from BerryDunn on the tremendous graphics in the presentation which identify everything in our City that can be used for recreation. He also thanked City staff and those from BerryDunn on the outstanding survey and outreach. Finally, he commented that he was extremely pleased about the responses received from middle schoolers and thought it was unfortunate that there was not more participation from adults in the community. He then thanked everyone who participated in the survey for offering their perspective.

REGIONAL ISSUES

There were no regional issues to be reported on.

NEW BUSINESS

There were no items of new business.

CLOSED SESSION

3. [22-0182](#) Closed session pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711 A (.1), (.3), and (.8) to consider appointments as listed on the agenda; to conduct the performance evaluations of the City Manager, City Attorney and City Clerk; to discuss the disposition of publicly held real property in the Phoebus and Downtown

areas of the City where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining or negotiating strategy of the City; and to consult with legal counsel employed by the City regarding specific legal matters concerning taxi cab ordinances in the Hampton City Code which require the provision of legal advice by such counsel.

The Mayor announced that the closed session would take place in the Lawson Conference Room.

At 1:56 p.m., a motion was made by Councilmember Hobbs and seconded by Councilmember Brown, that this Closed Session - Motion be approved . The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 9 - Councilmember Bowman, Councilmember Weston Brown, Vice Mayor Weston Brown, Councilmember Brown, Vice Mayor Brown, Councilmember Ferebee, Vice Mayor Gray, Councilmember Hobbs and Mayor Tuck

4. [22-0188](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Animal Control Advisory Committee
5. [22-0189](#) Consideration of an Appointment to the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities
6. [22-0193](#) Consideration of an Appointment to the Board of Review of Real Estate Assessments
7. [22-0194](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Peninsula Town Center CDA
8. [22-0195](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Hampton-Newport News Community Services Board
9. [22-0196](#) Consideration of an Appointment to the Hampton-Newport News Community Criminal Justice Board
10. [22-0197](#) Consideration of Appointments to the Hampton Commission on the Arts
11. [22-0198](#) Consideration of an Appointment to the Thomas Nelson Community College Board of Trustees

12. [22-0199](#) Consideration of an Appointment to the Virginia Air & Space Science Center

CERTIFICATION

13. [22-0166](#) Resolution Certifying Closed Session
- A motion was made by Councilmember Billy Hobbs and seconded by Councilmember Steven Brown, that this Closed Session - Certification be approved. The motion carried unanimously and then Councilman Hobbs moved to rescind his motion so that Council could reconvene. Councilman Brown seconded the motion to rescind and that motion passed unanimously. Council continued their closed session.

At 6:14 p.m., a new motion was made by Councilmember Billy Hobbs and seconded by Councilmember Steven Brown, that this Closed Session - Certification be approved. and it carried by the following vote:

- Aye:** 9 - Councilmember Bowman, Councilmember Weston Brown, Vice Mayor Weston Brown, Councilmember Brown, Vice Mayor Brown, Councilmember Ferebee, Vice Mayor Gray, Councilmember Hobbs and Mayor Tuck

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:14 p.m.

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

Donnie R. Tuck
Mayor

Katherine K. Glass, CMC
Clerk of Council

Date approved by Council _____