



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 Eleanor Weston Brown
Councilmember Steven L. Brown
Councilmember Linda D. Curtis
Councilmember W.H. "Billy" Hobbs
Councilmember Chris Snead

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

Wednesday, March 11, 2020

1:00 PM

Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Mayor Gray called the meeting to order at 1pm. Mayor Tuck was out ill and Councilwoman Curtis was out of town. Katherine Glass, Clerk of Council, was also out of town, and Jennifer Green, Deputy Clerk of Council, filled in for her.

Present 5 - Councilmember Eleanor Weston Brown, Councilmember Steven L. Brown, Vice Mayor Jimmy Gray, Councilmember Billy Hobbs, and Councilmember Chris Snead

Excused 2 - Councilmember Linda D. Curtis, and Mayor Donnie R. Tuck

DONNIE R. TUCK PRESIDED

AGENDA

1. [20-0100](#) Briefing on the Parks Master Plan

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

City Manager Mary Bunting noted that Council has been previously advised on the effort and a City-wide survey was conducted to obtain input from residents. She introduced Mr. Art Thatcher from GreenPlay LLC, who provided a presentation to Council.

Vice Mayor Gray asked for clarification on the walkable access rating of 96% of residents. He asked if the people living within one mile of a park did not include

school parks. Mr. Thatcher stated that the rating included the neighborhood parks at schools.

Councilman Brown asked if they would be presented with a list of priorities and projects. Mr. Thatcher stated that they use a matrix to identify the key issues and where they rate for the public so they can prioritize a list, balancing the in-person responses with the online City-wide survey results.

Presented by Art Thatcher, GreenPlay LLC.

2. [20-0098](#) Briefing on the Five Year Consolidated Housing Plan

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

Ms. Bunting noted that Kimley-Horn, the City's consultants on this issue, gave a presentation on the community engagement plan approximately one month ago. This presentation will provide an update on that engagement and the next steps that will be taken. She introduced Mr. Dan McCormick, Chief Neighborhood Development Specialist, who introduced Ms. Blair Knighting from Kimley-Horn, who provided a presentation to Council.

Councilwoman Snead asked if the consultants looked at the previous five-year plan to determine what was accomplished. She asked if there was a report of what the City has done since the last five-year plan. Ms. Knighting noted that the City completes a Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) every year as a requirement by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It states what the City wants to accomplish and what it has accomplished. She offered to present that information to Council in the future. Councilwoman Snead stated that she would like to see that information, to see what the City has done.

Referring to Slide 15, Councilwoman Snead asked for clarification on the number of households in Hampton that had a housing cost burden of more than 30-50% of their income. Ms. Knighting clarified that approximately 21,000 households have a burden of 30% or higher, and approximately 10,000 of those 21,000 households have a burden of 50% or higher.

Councilman Brown asked what percentage of the numbers on Slide 15 were related to low wages and poverty. Ms. Knighting was unsure, but would get that information for Council.

Vice Mayor Gray noted that the poverty rate in Hampton is 15%, but there are approximately one-third of citizens in a home where their housing burden is greater than 30%. He asked if this was consistent with the poverty rate, or how this

discrepancy could be explained. Ms. Knighting stated that the poverty rate is based on the US Census, and how many people are in a household. There could be six people in a household who make below the threshold of what the US Census considers appropriate income for a household of that size. This is a different type of quantitative data.

Vice Mayor Gray stated he believed people with a high housing cost burden typically seem to be those families who live at or around the poverty level. He asked if this was an incorrect assumption. Ms. Knighting stated that it is not necessarily an incorrect assumption, but it would be a different way of looking at the data because the housing burden is different than the poverty level.

Referencing Slide 21, Vice Mayor Gray stated that it looked like Hampton had reduced the number of households lacking complete plumbing and kitchen facilities between 2011 and 2018. He believes this is significant and he was not sure if this was because of programs the City has in place. Ms. Knighting stated that this is a very positive number and it shows the City is making progress.

Councilwoman Snead stated that she would like to attribute those changes to the City's rental inspection program, where the City has made a concerted effort to look at some of the housing to make sure rental properties are up to Code.

Councilman Brown asked if the City assists renters with grants or other programs when the City notices deficiencies through the rental inspection program. He noted that renters would also need permission from the property owner to make those improvements. Ms. Bunting stated that the City does not put the onus on the renter to make improvements, but compels the property owner to make those improvements. These property owners are leasing those properties and receiving an income, so the City does not offer assistance to what are essentially business owners to make corrections to their properties. In other situations, such as senior citizens or a citizen living in poverty who has deficiencies in a home they own themselves, the City has programs available to help where it can. This includes the Housing Blitz and various housing rehabilitation programs.

Councilman Brown asked how enforcement worked once a problem had been observed through the rental inspection program. Ms. Bunting stated that property owners cannot lease their properties until such time as it is brought up to Code. This is to protect renters and ensure they are living in a property that is up to Code. There are enforcement actions that are closely followed to ensure improvements are made. They will not receive rental inspection certificates until those improvements are done. Depending on the speed of improvements and the severity of the issues, the property may remain under supervision for an extended time.

Councilman Brown stated that he hopes to see continued improvement in those numbers. Ms. Bunting stated it is important to recognize the progress made by the City. She agreed with Councilwoman Snead's suggestion that the consultants compile the CAPERs so that everyone can see the cumulative effect of those improvements over five years. This could also clearly indicate where the City has not made progress that it may want to focus on.

Vice Mayor Gray noted that during the last Work Session, Council discussed its priorities. One of those priorities was to increase the funding available to support the housing programs, particularly seniors who are sometimes struggling to make improvements to their homes. There are 274 people on the waiting list for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, and the City plans to add additional funding to begin to make greater progress. He believes the combination of the rehabilitation programs and the rental inspection program is making good progress.

Ms. Bunting noted that, by State Code, there is not a rental inspection program throughout the whole City, only in the allowed designated districts. She stated that it would be interesting to see where the poor conditions are in the community overlaid with the rental inspection districts. This would be a way to use the data to perhaps increase those rental inspection districts, if there is a concentration of substandard facilities outside the current districts.

Councilwoman Brown noted that the data that shows households who are burdened by housing costs of 30% of their income or higher do not indicate if those households are renters or owners. She noted that 30% could be a mortgage, which says something very different about those citizens versus those who are spending that amount renting. She stated that it would be helpful to have that additional information.

Presented by Blair Knighting, Kimley-Horn and Associates.

3. [20-0107](#) Budget Briefing - Update on the Citizen Input Sessions

Attachments: [Presentation](#)

Ms. Bunting noted that the City is in the midst of doing its engagement with the public on the budget, prior to the release of the Manager's Recommended Budget. This is something the City has done for over 10 years, to give citizens a chance to provide input prior to the final development of the budget. There is still an opportunity after the release of the Manager's Recommended Budget. She noted that it is helpful for people to know what kind of questions the City will be asking and what kind of input they will be able to give. There is always a portion of prepared questions in

addition to an opportunity for open dialogue and feedback. She introduced Ms. Robin McCormick, Communications Strategist, who provided a presentation to Council.

Councilwoman Snead asked Ms. McCormick to explain how the Facebook Live input sessions would work. Ms. McCormick stated that the City Manager will be in the City's podcast/broadcast studio for an interview with Ms. McCormick. People who watch on Facebook will type in their questions, and someone else on Marketing staff will read the question to Ms. Bunting for response. Those watching will also be referred to the full polling options that will be available online.

Presented by Robin McCormick, Communications Strategist.

REGIONAL ISSUES

There were no regional issues.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

CLOSED SESSION

4. [20-0105](#) Closed session pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711.A.3, .5 and .8 to discuss the disposition of city-owned property in the Kecoughtan Road Corridor where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the City, to discuss a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business' or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the community, and to consult with legal counsel employed or retained by the City regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel.

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

Aye: 5 - Councilmember Weston Brown, Councilmember Brown, Vice Mayor Gray, Councilmember Hobbs and Councilmember Snead

CERTIFICATION

5. [20-0095](#) Resolution Certifying Closed Session

A motion was made by Councilmember Billy Hobbs and seconded by Councilmember Chris Snead that this Closed Session - Certification be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Councilmember Weston Brown, Councilmember Brown, Vice Mayor Gray, Councilmember Hobbs and Councilmember Snead

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:58 p.m.

Donnie R. Tuck
Mayor

Katherine K. Glass, CMC
Clerk of Council

Date approved by Council _____