



City of Hampton

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

Council Approved Minutes - Final City Council Ceremonial 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, October 27, 2021

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Tuck called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. All members of the City Council were present. The City Manager and City Attorney were away on City Business. Brian DeProfio, Assistant City Manager, was sitting for Ms. Bunting and Lola Rodriguez-Perkins, Senior Deputy City Attorney, was sitting for Ms. Ivery.

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

CEREMONIAL ITEMS: Spotlight on Sentara and Riverside Hospitals and Health Systems

The City's Communications Strategist, Robin McCormick, introduced tonight's Spotlight on Sentara and Riverside Hospitals and Health Systems which expressed thanks to our frontline health care workers, most particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ms. McCormick read the following summary about the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an outpouring of love for healthcare workers. They got signs of support and free food. We, our entire national society, loved them. They worked long hours, often a lot of overtime. The national shortage of PPE (personal protective equipment) in the early days meant

some people had less protection than they should have had. Front-line workers means a lot of things. Of course, hospitals, doctors and nurses. Family practices, the place where many of us go first when something is wrong. But, it's not just the doctors and nurses. It's the people who clean machines, who mop floors, who disinfect the equipment. The people who deliver meals in a hospital. The people who look at the samples of COVID tests. The receptionists. The Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. But now, COVID has dragged on for a long year and a half, and unfortunately, it's still not under control. Locally, cases are declining a bit from last month's peak, but last year, cases rose during the cold weather when people went indoors, so we aren't quite sure what to predict.

We are all tired of it. Business owners, especially retail, restaurants, entertainment and services. The pandemic has exacerbated political divisions that were already very deep. No one wants to wear a mask. We want concerts and festivals and movies. We want a holiday season with family and friends. We want to stop losing our family and friends. We want to stop being scared. Working parents, who have had to cope with daycare shutdowns, school closures and virtual learning last year, and now unexpected outbreaks, are just plain tired. Now, that's how the rest of us feel. Stop and think for a moment about our healthcare workers. They've spent a year and a half caring for our friends and neighbors. They have cared for people with a contagious, infectious, sometimes deadly disease, and for the first eight months, before there was a vaccine, they were extremely vulnerable. Many of them contracted COVID-19. A few may have passed it along to family or friends or co-workers. Some of them died.

Studies suggest that medical professionals made up 10 to 20 percent of all coronavirus cases in the early months of the pandemic. They make up only 4 percent of our population. A year and a half later, there is no outpouring of love for our healthcare workers. It's quite the opposite: They have become the targets of anger people feel toward the pandemic.

A National Nurses United survey of registered nurses last year showed that about 20 percent faced increased on-the-job violence, which they attributed to COVID-19-related staffing shortages, changes in the patient population, and restrictions for visitors. An international study found that healthcare workers were about 50 percent more likely than others to have been harassed, bullied, or hurt. A PBS story just last month noted across the country, doctors and nurses on the front lines against the coronavirus are dealing with hostility, threats and violence from patients angry over safety rules to keep the disease from spreading.

A hospital chief nursing executive in Texas said "Our staff have been cursed at, screamed at, threatened with bodily harm and even had knives pulled on them, and it

is escalating.”

In Idaho, doctors and nurses have been accused of killing patients by grieving family members who don’t believe COVID-19 is real.

Some people assume that healthcare workers carry the virus and are contagious. I know of one person whose friends called her a “dirty healthcare worker” and wouldn’t be near her, or even return phone calls.

Locally, I know a nurse who now won’t go pick up lunch in her scrubs anymore, or at least in some places, because people harass her and tell her to leave. That’s quite a change from the offers of free food a year and a half ago.

So tonight, Hampton City Council wants our healthcare workers to know how much we appreciate the amazing job they have done in taking care of all of us. Even people who haven’t had coronavirus have had heart attacks or need cancer treatments or have had broken ankles, torn ligaments and eye surgeries.

Ms. McCormick introduced the first of two videos which showed clips of healthcare workers commenting about their experiences during the pandemic and a message from City Manager Mary Bunting.

Ms. McCormick continued with the summary.

In particular, we would also like to thank the management of the two major health systems for being regional leaders during this crisis. Riverside and Sentara joined with regional government leaders to help manage the supply of the vaccine, especially creating super-cold storage. They helped staff the mass clinics, have held neighborhood clinics and have done outreach to vulnerable populations. The regional partnership includes not just Sentara and Riverside and the Virginia Health Department, it also includes: Six Peninsula governments (Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson, Williamsburg and James City and York Counties); Children’s Hospital of the King’s Daughters, Bon Secours, other smaller doctors’ office groups; at least three local pharmacies; the Virginia Department of Emergency Management; Hampton University and Christopher Newport University; the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association, and probably more. Literally, the meeting invitation goes to 100 email addresses, and almost all of us show up for a zoom biweekly meeting at 7 a.m.

Ms. McCormick announced that City Manager Mary Bunting was instrumental in getting this regional effort together and then introduced a clip of the City Manager acknowledging and thanking Riverside and Sentara for their leadership and help.

Ms. McCormick also noted that all of the healthcare worker videos are of local employees of Riverside and Sentara.

Dr. Kirkpatrick "Kapua" Conley, Regional President, Peninsula, Sentara CarePlex Hospital and Dr. Mike Dacey, President and Chief Operating Officer of Riverside Health System, both gave brief remarks. Mayor Tuck also conveyed his appreciation for their efforts.

Mayor Tuck thanked those in the healthcare system for the manner in which they distributed the vaccine in our community early on when supplies were limited. He also briefly spoke about the impact the pandemic has had on the careers of our healthcare workers and thanked them for the effort and sacrifices they have made.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

Donnie R. Tuck
Mayor

Katherine K. Glass, CMC
Clerk of Council

Date approved by Council _____