

The special regular meeting of the Petersburg City Council was held on Tuesday, January 19, 2021, live streamed. Mayor Parham called the meeting to order at 12:20p.m.

1. ROLL CALL:

Present:

Council Member Charles H. Cuthbert, Jr.
Council Member Treska Wilson-Smith
Council Member W. Howard Myers
Council Member John A. Hart, Sr.
Council Member Darrin Hill
Vice Mayor Annette Smith-Lee
Mayor Samuel Parham

Absent: None

Present from City Administration:

City Manager Aretha R. Ferrell-Benavides
City Attorney Anthony C. Williams
Clerk of Council Nykesha D. Jackson

2. PRAYER:

Mayor Parham stated, "Councilman Hill will lead us in our opening prayer."

Council Member Hill led the council meeting in prayer.

3. CLOSED SESSION:

*No items for this portion of the agenda.

4. MOMENT OF SILENCE:

Mayor Parham led council and citizens in the moment of silence.

5. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Parham led council and the citizens in the pledge of allegiance.

6. DETERMINATION OF THE PRESENCE OF A QUORUM:

A quorum was determined with the presence of all City Council Members except Council Member Hart.

7. PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATION OF CEREMONIAL PROCLAMATIONS:

*No items for this portion of the agenda.

Mayor Parham stated, "For our Positive Petersburg moment today, I want to recognize and congratulate former Virginia State University Dean of the College of Agriculture, Dr. Jewel (Hairston) Bronaugh. Dr. Bronaugh has been nominated to serve as the new Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) by President-elect Joe Biden. Dr. Bronaugh is one of five women nominated by the Biden Administration to serve

*Audio available upon request.

in the number two spot as Deputy Secretary at key Cabinet agencies. The United States Deputy Secretary of Agriculture is the second highest-ranking official in the USDA and runs the day-to-day operations of the almost 100,000 employee department.

8. REPORTS/RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC INFORMATION PERIOD:

Folakemi Osoba, Public Information Officer, stated, “Good afternoon Mayor and other Members of Council. I have no responses from the last meeting.”

9. COMMUNICATIONS/SPECIAL REPORTS:

a. City Manager’s Report – Aretha R. Ferrell-Benavides, City Manager

Information: [City-Managers-report-11921 \(petersburgva.gov\)](https://petersburgva.gov/city-managers-report-11921)

Mrs. Benavides gave a brief overview of her report.

Key points:

- New Interim Fire Chief Scott Liebold started today and was sworn in. He will also be helping with helping to find a permanent fire chief. He will assist with promotional policies and challenges with EMS and policy updates.
- Completing move to new banking led by finance director. There will also be additional training for staff as well.
- Park and Ride Structure is currently still on schedule. Demolition has taken place and it is reimbursable 100% by state.
- Dominion has been working with the City with the LED Light conversion project. This will create better lighting within the City.
- Southside Depot was a project that the City Manager started upon arriving in the City and they have been looking at completion. This was initially scheduled to be the new site for the Department for Interior and Headquarter for Tourism.
- St. Andrews Street Bridge was supposed to begin in December 2020 but due to the holiday season and some supply issues they were behind on it. The contract anticipates being physically onsite by the end of January to start work on the project.
- Litter has always been an issue. They are currently working on the litter campaign to keep Petersburg clean.

There was discussion among City Council and staff.

b. COVID-19 Update

Darnetta Tyus, Deputy City Manager, gave an update on COVID-19.

Key points:

- The death toll has gone up by one to 37.
- There has been a total of 1,551 active cases in Petersburg. As of the 18th of January, 1,236 of those cases have cleared, leaving 178 active cases. The active case number has been higher.
- The state has caught up on putting all the data that was lagging during the holidays. So, the number of active cases now stands at 278.
- Testing is constantly going on in the City of Petersburg. They are still scheduling through the Department of Health but will let everyone know when walkups are happening. The next testing

*Audio available upon request.

that is going to happen is January 21st from 1pm-3pm. The site will not be stated because you still must schedule your test.

- They have started vaccinations across the Crater District. The Crater District for Petersburg must be scheduled. They are in Phase 1A. The goal is to do the best job possible and give as many vaccinations as possible.

There was discussion among City Council and staff.

10. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA (to include minutes of previous meeting/s)

- a. Minutes of Closed Session of January 4, 2021, Closed Session of January 5, 2021, Organizational City Council Meeting of January 5, 2021, and January 5, 2021 Special Regular City Council Meeting.
- b. Schedule a public hearing to incorporate a fee schedule within the appendix of the City's Code of Ordinances and amend the fees for the building permit fees.

Council Member Hill made a motion to approve the consent agenda as read by the Mayor. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Smith-Lee. The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Smith-Lee, Hart, Hill, and Parham; Absent: Myers

11. OFFICIAL PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- a. A public hearing to receive public comments on the amendment to the FY2020-21 General Fund Budget.

BACKGROUND: The City requests city Council schedule a public hearing on the amended FY2020-21 General Fund Budget. This amendment will adjust the budget to address current revenue, expenditures, and operational changes considering the COVID-19 pandemic.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend City Council schedule a public hearing on January 19, 2021.

Information: [FY2020-21-General-Fund-Budget-Amendment \(petersburgva.gov\)](https://petersburgva.gov/fy2020-21-general-fund-budget-amendment)

Robert Floyd, Director of Budget, and Procurement gave a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed amendments to the budget.

There was discussion among City Council and staff.

Mayor Parham opened the floor for public comments.

Patrick Ingram, 836 South Gillfield Drive, stated, "I want to just note on the record that I was a little concerned about at a moment we had in the middle of a conversation there was some confusion in correction of accidental appropriation and that is concerning. But more diving into looking through this proposal, specifically resiliency pay. I am just questioning what about the continuing needs of Petersburg residents in this pandemic. More specifically upgrades to our water billing and collections technology and infrastructure. That will decrease the proposal and upgrade times to see a new system that will work for all. But you know we have Petersburg residents that are jobless, homeless, or barely able to keep the water flowing in their pipes. It is just concerning that we are not looking at appropriating funding especially now when we do not have a homeless shelter within the City to open emergency homeless shelters, even leveraging gyms and unused City facilities. And leveraging some of the appropriating funding for operational cost. Even the expeditious rollout of actual free citywide broadband for all. I do understand that a lot of these employees that were working on the frontline

*Audio available upon request.

are deserving of resiliency pay such as bus drivers and 9-1-1 dispatchers. At the beginning of the pandemic many offices were closed to the public, therefore their actual occupational hazard to being exposed to COVID 19 was limited. Which is why I think appropriation should be considered for all residents during this pandemic. We have working families who are still working at their jobs and not having the telecommute option. They are more at risk in their roles in grocery stores and in working in critical capacity to keep our economy flowing. I just I question where is the resiliency pay for the residents in Petersburg. Thank you.”

Barb Rudolph, 1675 Mt. Vernon Street, stated, “I wanted to say that I am very pleased that this presentation was given in so much detail with a lot of explanation. And it was also good to see the questions that came from Council Members because that is encouraging. Some of our reviews have seem much more perfunctory and with less interest. So, I just want to thank you all for being interested and looking at and asking questions. And, to the staff and the City Manager for providing a lot of explanations and for providing the context and the prospective needed. We are past the halfway point for fiscal year 2021. So, what we are talking about now is any kind of midcourse corrections. By the time you implement them it only effects about a third of the year. So, I do not really think anything about this proposed amendment can be changed in a major way. It reflects the reality of what you are bringing in and what you are spending. It does bring to mind that in talking about the budget that if you all would start providing information at summary level on all the categories of expense like the personnel, benefits, contractual, supplies, maintenance, etc., all of those categories. To have a cross cutting summary for the whole organization. Because I think that is where you see if you are spending more or less money in certain categories. You can tell when you look at ups and downs between and among different organizations in government that it depends on where something is paid for. It may or may not be clear which is being spent overall on various things. And even to use on of the areas for example billing and collections or not going into collections but the customer engagement center, I think that is what it is called. It is a combination of City employees and contract employees. Some of that is not really clear from the presentation so I am just asking that as you do budget development consider putting that into your budget development and reports. Also, one question about today, I know that we talked about various interns and people being hired and part-time people and so forth, and I do not know whether the amended expenses reflect the whole year or partial year. So, that is going to impact what gets budgeted next year. It will be very interesting to see more details even for next year’s budget. Thanks.”

Seeing no further hands, Mayor Parham closed public comments.

Council Member Hill stated, “The only thing I would like before we get to, I know we are not at the point of voting this in, but I would like for to be ensured that the budget committee if they have gotten together with the directors to make sure that this is feasible. Because I see a lot of increases and decreases and things of that nature. And I understand that we are halfway through, but I really want to make sure that they have got in contact with their directors. Not saying that they have not. I do not know for sure or not but the only thing I am aware of is that board members have called me from the library about the \$50,000 and they may lose some money behind that. So, I am concerned about that. And then going forward I really want us to be more diligent about the insurance and healthcare in which we are giving to the City of Petersburg. I know that we talk about this every year going up and I know that we have been giving \$50 stipends and things of that nature. But I know it is going up all around but we are in a group type situation so we should be able to get better healthcare and things of that nature. So, I really want us to really focus our attention on those things and at the appropriate time I would like to talk about the homelessness in our City. But I probably put those on my comments. But those are the only things Mr. Mayor.”

Mayor Parham stated, “This was our public hearing. At the next meeting we will be voting on the amendment. Thank you, Mr. Floyd.”

- b. Consideration to appropriate the balance of Urban Highway Set-Aside Funds in the amount of \$2,601,761.50 from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT).

*Audio available upon request.

BACKGROUND: In fiscal year 2018, the City's Urban Maintenance funds were set-aside and managed by VDOT due to the City's financial crisis. To ensure compliance, the City met and worked with VDOT representatives for approximately two fiscal years. Activity codes were changed to align with the VDOT Urban Construction and Maintenance Program Manual, Street Operations and Grounds personnel were trained on the changes, and delinquent outstanding Weldon Cooper Highway Survey Reports were completed to bring the City back into compliance. In fiscal year 2020 the set-aside program ended and the set aside funds were sent back to the City where it was deposited into a new bank account.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend City Council approve the attached appropriation ordinance in the amount of \$2,601,761.50 to be added to Street Operations for fiscal year 2021.

Mrs. Benavides gave a briefing on the appropriation request.

Council Member Hart made a motion to approve the appropriation ordinance in the amount of \$2,601,761.50 to be added to Street Operations for fiscal year 2021. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hill.

Mayor Parham opened the floor for public comment.

Seeing no hands, Mayor Parham closed the public hearing.

The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Hart, Hill, Smith-Lee, and Parham; Absent: Myers

21-ORD-3 AN ORDINANCE, AS AMENDED, SAID ORDINANCE MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING JULY 1, 2020, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2021 FOR THE STREET OPERATIONS FUND.

- c. Consideration to approve the supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$7,397,181 for Petersburg Public Schools for the current fiscal year.

BACKGROUND: Once we determined the amounts that would need to be carried over in our grants, and as received grant awards for the exact totals, the School Board approved those amendments to the FY2021 appropriation. We are now requesting that Petersburg City Council formally approve and appropriate these budget amendments in accordance with State Code.

The summary of appropriations as of October 20, 2020 is as follows: Use of Food Services Reserves accounts for \$39,375 amendments to existing grants and new grants adds an additional \$7,357,806. The supplemental appropriations total \$7,397,381.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend that City Council approve the supplemental appropriation for Petersburg Public Schools.

Mrs. Benavides gave briefing on the request for approval of the supplemental appropriation for Petersburg Public Schools.

Council Member Hill made a motion to approve the appropriation ordinance for the Petersburg Public Schools in the amount of \$7,397,381. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Smith-Lee.

Mayor Parham opened the floor for public comment.

*Audio available upon request.

Patrick Ingram, 836 South Gillfield Drive, stated, "My only comment is that anything that we can do to focus on the modernizing of schools and upgrading our bus fleets and really engaging to improve our overall infrastructure of our educational institutions here in Petersburg should be accepted gracefully. Because we have a long way to go when it comes to improving our educational offerings to the students and families here in Petersburg. Thank you."

Mayor Parham closed the public hearing.

There was discussion among City Council and staff.

The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Hart, Hill, Smith-Lee, and Parham; Absent: Myers

21-ORD-4 AN ORDINANCE, AS AMENDED, SAID ORDINANCE MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING JULY 1, 2020, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2021 FOR PETERSBURG PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

- d. Public hearing for consideration of an ordinance authorizing the execution and recordation of a deed of vacation and quitclaim of property at 37 Slagle Avenue, Parcel ID: 014010001, related to a 15' Sewer easement on the property.

BACKGROUND: The plat entitled "Pin Oak, Petersburg, Virginia" dated October 5, 1971, duly recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the City of Petersburg, in Plat Book 3 at Page 262 ½ (the "Plat"), a 15' sewer easement was dedicated to the City of Petersburg ("Easement").

To facilitate the development of the property encumbered by the Easement, the City is requested to vacate and release its interest in a portion of the Easement.

The existing sewer line will be realigned to facilitate construction and encumbered by a new easement.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the City Council approves the ordinance authorizing the execution and recordation of a deed of vacation and quitclaim of property at 37 Slagle Avenue.

Andrew Barnes, City Engineer and General Manager of Utilities, gave an update on the public hearing for 37 Slagle Avenue.

Mayor Parham opened the floor for public comment.

Seeing no hands, Mayor Parham closed the public hearing.

Vice Mayor Smith-Lee made a motion to approve the ordinance authorizing the execution and recordation of a deed of vacation and quitclaim of property at 37 Slagle Avenue. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hill.

There was discussion among City Council and staff.

The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Hart, Hill, Smith-Lee, and Parham; Absent: Myers

21-ORD-5 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION AND RECORDATION OF A DEED OF

*Audio available upon request.

VACATION AND QUITCLAIM OF PROPERTY AT 37 SLAGLE AVENUE, PARCEL ID 014-010001, RELATED TO A 15' SEWER EASEMENT.

- e. Public hearing and consideration for adoption of an ordinance to amend and re-adopt Chapter 1 Sections 1-1 through 1-19 of the Petersburg City Code in furtherance of the City's Comprehensive Code update.

BACKGROUND: The City of Petersburg publishes its Code of Ordinances ("City Code") through a company known as "Municode." According to Municode, the last comprehensive review of the City Code was conducted in year 2001.

A number of the provisions of the City Code have been found to be outdated or otherwise contain errors. City Council has requested that the City Attorney conduct a comprehensive review of the City Code in order to update and correct deficiencies in the City Code.

The City Attorney has reviewed Chapter 1 Sections 1-1 through 1-19 of the City Code and recommends that City Council amend and readopt Chapter 1 Sections 1-1 through 1-19 as reflected in (Exhibit A) of the proposed ordinance.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the ordinance.

Mr. Williams gave a briefing on the approval of the ordinance request.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing.

Seeing no hands, Mayor Parham closed the public hearing.

Council Member Hill made a motion to adopt the ordinance for Municode. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hart. The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Hart, Hill, Smith-Lee, and Parham; Absent: Myers

21-ORD-6 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND RE-ADOPT CHAPTER 1 SECTIONS 1-1 THROUGH 1-19 OF THE PETERSBURG CITY CODE IN FURTHERANCE OF THE CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE CODE UPDATE.

12. PUBLIC INFORMATION PERIOD: A public information period, limited in time to 30 minutes, shall be part of an Order of Business at each regular council meeting. Each speaker shall be a resident or business owner of the City and shall be limited to three minutes. No speaker will be permitted to speak on any item scheduled for consideration on the regular docket of the meeting at which the speaker is to speak. The order of speakers, limited by the 30-minute time period, shall be determined as follows:

- a) First, in chronological order of the notice, persons who have notified the Clerk no later than 12:00 noon of the day of the meeting,
- b) Second, in chronological order of their sign up, persons who have signed a sign-up sheet placed by the Clerk in the rear of the meeting room prior to the meeting.

Gary Talley – Having technical difficulty.

Michelle Murrills, 131 South Market Street, stated, "I just want to say that yesterday was Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and I am disappointed that there was nothing done for it by the City of Petersburg. I spent the day walking around Petersburg and picking up garbage as that is a big initiative here in Petersburg right now. Did

*Audio available upon request.

you know that Martin Luther King Day is the only federally designated national day of service? We should have had some acknowledgement of that. If I can get an email or a text about the meeting today, why could not we put out a text or email about Martin Luther King Day and the things that could be done around the City to celebrate it. After all this holiday started in Petersburg in 1973. We should be very proud of the fact that almost 50 years ago the City of Petersburg started it all. I lived in Arizona in the late 80s when Arizona refused to allow it to be a holiday. I hated that. I cannot believe that I live where it all started and there is no acknowledgement whatsoever. People complain about the blight, the violence, etc. here all the time. An important way to combat that is to have civic pride. After all, if you have pride in the things that you own and where you live it goes along in ending those problems. All I hear around here is that before 'x' happened in Petersburg it was a great City. But if you want to get back to when this was a great City Petersburg needs to have civic pride. We should have signs proclaiming that Petersburg was the first to celebrate Martin Luther King Day. No one cares that this is the 'Crepe Myrtle City.' How do I know this, just look at our civic pride? We have none. We should be promoting our African American History. After all there is a great interest in the National Museum of African American History and Culture in DC, which is only three hours away from here. I saw on Facebook the other day that someone said that no one cared about civil war history in Petersburg. I do not believe that is true. There is so much more than the four years of civil war history here. Why is the Martin Luther King safehouse allowed to fall into disrepair? Why is the Victoria Adams House where we even have pictures of Martin Luther King being there allowed to fall in disrepair? Both houses have essentially been abandoned. Why is the City not fining the owners for every little thing that the Municipal Code allows with the idea of eventually forcing the owners to sell or spend a lot of money on them? After all, that is what happened to the house that I live in. The people who owned it moved away and after a couple of years of the City nickel and diming them so much that they decided to sell at a loss, and I got a good deal. With African American history we could be bringing people into this City to see these houses and learn these fascinating facts. We could be displaying our civic pride and show people that there is so much history here. History that today is being ignored and being allowed to fall into disrepair. Thank you."

Patrick Ingram, 836 South Gillfield Drive, stated, "I firsts want to start off by saying that municipal leader, senators and delegates consistently send out information to keep their constituents in the loop about what is going on. Councilwoman Treska Wilson-Smith does this with her newsletters. It is concerning as well as a shame how many of us residents in other wards receive information. So, I guess my question to you all is when does the remaining council expect to disseminate information to us outside of these meetings to meet the need of the constituents. That can be through an avenue of Facebook Live, or answering questions on Twitter or other social media outlets. The Ward 5 side of the Pegram Street has seen an entirely new pavement installed. My question is why is the Ward 6 side still looks as if it has experienced a war. An even an allocation of safe drivable roads has that equity. If we cannot have equity with our streets how can we have equity in them when it comes to the fair distribution of CARES and CDBG funding, which impacts the lives of residents in Ward 6 and beyond. Also, I think that it is imperative that we look into the Wegman's distribution center attempt in Richmond and see if that is an opportunity that we can capitalize on. I also ask that we please have in the next meeting have a public health or an individual that has a background in public health or medicine who can provide updates and disseminate COVID related information. Especially when it comes to Council Member Hill's question regarding quarantine versus isolation. And more importantly can accurately update and provide center for disease control guidance and CDC recommended screening for confirmatory negatives. With that being said throughout the past few meetings, I really appreciate council members stepping up and defending citizens. I really want to thank Vice Mayor Smith-Lee and Council Member Hill, especially when it comes to the right for citizens to have the space and voice as well as Councilwoman Wilson-Smith. So, I ask of this to stop taking offense to our blunt criticism. It is the job of council members to really role with the good and the bad and the moods of the people. At least you have people who still care about this City and her democratic process. And know that there are young leaders ready and eager to get to work and serve. I do think that when it comes to council and the length of the meetings that it would be interesting to see the engagement of citizens. And I am talking about the creation of commissions and boards like commission to locate and coordinate projects with the Sister City, a gang prevention community taskforce, a housing

*Audio available upon request.

affordability advisory committee, a youth and family's collaborative commission, a citizen's core council, a public safety and human services committee, a climate energy environmental policy committee, green city committee and even a beautification committee. Engaging the public which we are not necessarily seeing on council can be a way that you can justifiably say that you have had citizens input on matters that you decide on. Thank you."

Barbara Rudolph, 1675 Mt. Vernon Street, stated, "Good afternoon everyone. I honestly did not consult with any of the other citizens who spoke. I appreciate their comments, but I have something similar to say to what Mr. Ingram said about the commentary at the last special meeting on the public information period and having time for citizens to share. And there was some discussion about whether that should be held only one meeting a month versus two. I also thank Councilors Wilson-Smith, Hill, and Smith-Lee for defending the right of the citizens to speak and recognizing that the meetings are for citizens at least to some extent. I just wanted to note that I think that if you look back to over at least a year to 2020, since the ponderous of meetings have been online or virtual that there really has not been the amount of citizen comment there that you experienced when we met in the train station. I think partly because a lot of people work. I would say that out of the amount of time that is consumed in meetings, a minor amount comes in citizen commentary. I do think most of it is substantive and not just taking up time. So, I appreciate those of you that agree with that and I appreciate you saying so. Thank you."

Gary Talley, 2316 Fort Rice, stated, "It is kind of a repeat of what Patrick mentioned. Did we or are we going to make a bid for Wegman's Distribution Center? They are getting pushed back from where they are trying to go now. And we here in Petersburg at the intersection of 95, 85, 295 and US Highway 460, we are a perfect place for a distribution center. On the topic of economic development, is that office working with other departments and commission in the City? It seems to me that economic development is a combined effort of many different departments and not just that small little office labeled economic development. The condition of our streets and our sidewalks, the results that we are getting from our school system, billing and collections, the water system, all that combines to make this a welcomed or unwelcomed place for businesses to relocate. Can the City please continuously clean up the interstate entryways and exit ramps? Exit 50 looks like a garbage pit. It cannot be that difficult to do. Thank you."

13. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM THE MAYOR OR OTHER MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL:

Council Member Cuthbert stated, "I want to follow up on a comment about the Martin Luther King House on Harrison Street. I believe that it is 514 Harrison Street and if that is what it is then it is on the City's blight log. I know that I asked that the Martin Luther King House be put on the blight log. And I will tell you what the blight log says. This is the January log. For 514 Harrison Street, it says no response from the owner for a NOV (Notice of Violation). And then it says that the next step is civil citation issued in 14 days. And the next date is January 25, 2021. That is the follow-up date from staff. I really commend staff for the way that they have got their efforts organized so that they can keep track of what they have done and their advance date, what they have accomplished and what they intend to do next. So, I ask staff to double check and make sure that the Martin Luther King House on Harrison Street is on the blight log. I think that it is. If it is not, I would ask staff to add it. And like everyone else we want to preserve our Petersburg history and our neighborhood services department is doing a fabulous job in working toward that end. Thank you, Mr. Mayor."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "I have nothing planned. I would like to elaborate on what Mr. Cuthbert just said and on Ms. Murrills statement. We are not doing enough to celebrate our African American History. And I know that you have heard this from me several times before. I cannot say it enough. It was part of our strategic plan. I am glad to see it in there. But while we wait our history continues to crumble, the Martin Luther King House, the Victoria Adams House. The Victoria Adams House is boarded up and it is a brick house and I have given you all a picture of it. The history is tremendous. Please look it up yourselves. George Roger Gregory House which is still standing where he grew up on North Carolina Avenue. We can make a true

*Audio available upon request.

African American Historical Trail off of these three homes alone. We need to do something to establish within our City an African American Board or Historical Board or something. Our history is worth preserving. That is the biggest thing right now that I keep telling us that we need to do. Thank you so much.”

Council Member Hill stated, “Hello everyone. I pray that all is well. I agree with my colleagues about MLK Day. In the years past, we have always had programs and things of that nature. I guess because of COVID nothing was really done. In the City, we did have some things that was going on. I know Tabernacle had their annual program that they have every year. Of course, it was virtual, Tabernacle Baptist Church. They had their Martin Luther King celebration on yesterday. And then the brothers of Petersburg Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated, my fraternity, we went to the Hope Center and we donated over \$5,600 and a truck of perishable items, nonperishable items along with our Kappa Leaguer’s. It was a great day of service for us on yesterday. We went there and unloaded a truck load, and we presented a check for over \$5,600. So, we were happy to do as well. So, that is one of the things that I wanted to mention. Another thing, I would like for staff or to reiterate or come up with a plan on how we can deal with our homeless people. We do see a growing number in the area. In some cases, people have somewhere to go but they just do not want to go there. And it may be something to that effect. I do know that some of the boarding houses and things of that nature, they live there but they just walk the streets all day. What you may see is that homeless may not be homeless and it may be that they just do not want to go there. But I know that we do have some homelessness in our City. Maybe we can come up with something. I know that we do not have a shelter here for men at this time. But we must do something. We just cannot turn a blind eye to that. Speaking of the exit, I like the fact that we are doing an innovation to all the signs in the area and talking about keeping Petersburg clean. I think that it is working. On the exits, what is happening is that you have a lot of individuals that are on the exits asking for money. And what is that a lot of people instead of giving them money they give them food and they will take that food and discard it right there at the exit. So, that is the reason why a lot of our exits like Crater Road, Exit 52, and if you come off that exit you see that those exits have more debris than that. I have gone through there and I have seen City workers clean it. And I will come right past and probably around lunch time and you will see trash still there. It takes all of us to do that. So, if you are riding by and you know that you have a soft heart for someone and you do not want to give them money, but you give them food. A lot of times that is what they do. They throw it right where they are. I have seen it done. So, we must be mindful of that. And given the climate of our nation at this time, I would like to admonish everyone, that we all know what happen two weeks ago on Wednesday at the nations capitol that words do matter. We are public officials and we have been called some of everything on social media and platforms like that. Words do matter. Like President Elect Joe Biden said, he said that it can either motivate an individual or it can ignite a situation. So, we must be careful about what our words and comments are on social media and different platforms like that. Because we want people to come to come to the City of Petersburg. We ourselves, the citizens and employees and the residents are talking bad about whether its City staff or whether it is the residents or whether it is the City in general. I mean we have the first amendment right, but it does not give me the right to go in a building and yell fire and there is no fire. So, with everything going on in the country this right here had me thinking I would like the City Attorney along with the HR Director to get together to see what policy and procedure we have with cyber bullying. Is there anything when we are hiring someone that they are not doing that on their social media site and if they are taking part in that right now. We have situations going on in our City where individuals are being bullied for no fault of their own. And I cannot do anything for the actual citizen but if you work for the City of Petersburg then that is our job to write policies and procedures. And we should have something in our handbook that deal with that. It is a big thing. Even with our First Lady in the White House that is one of her things about cyber bullying. So, we have to be careful with that. So, I would like to see the City Attorney along with the HR Director to get together to see what policy and procedures we have that relates to social media and our employees and what have you. And the last thing very quickly, I would like to see us to look at how we can get better insurance. We deal with this from time to time and I think that this is one of the things for recruitment or losing individuals of the City of Petersburg to make sure that we can keep our employees here. Thank you, members of council and Mr. Mayor.”

*Audio available upon request.

Vice Mayor Smith-Lee stated, "Hello again. And first I want to continue to just pray for our country during these trying times. I also want to congratulate Dr. Jewel Bronaugh. Jewel lived in 6th Ward and she grew up in Cool Springs. Her father the late Mr. Evans and Mother, Juanita Fields, they both taught for the City of Petersburg. They were just great teachers; an English teacher and I think he was an industrial arts teacher. He passed by a drunk driver; he was riding his bicycle. Jewel and her dad were very close. Jewel, I want to say that we are so proud of you and of your nomination as the Deputy Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture. Go Team Jewel. On January 23rd we are going to have two folds. The City Area Wide Cleanup and Ward 6 Cleanup. The area wide cleanup will start coming off the Washington Street exit at the old Neptune Building. We are going to collect trash and cleanup all the way up to Market Street. The start time will be 9:30am to 11:30am. The Ward 6 Cleanup location will start at Washington and Dunlop Street. And we are going to go all the way up to the Petersburg Pepsi Cola Plant. That start time is going to be 9am to 11am. So, the reason why I have the stagger start time is because I want to be able to be at both areas when we begin to start. Anyone that is interested in volunteering, please come out. If you want to do area wide that starts at 9:30am. The cleanup for Ward 6 will start at 9am. Supplies will be provided such as gloves, trash bags and mask. Also, I am going to have water and snacks. Please come out and let us get started and let's do this. That concludes my report."

Council Member Hill stated, "I just want to inform that the Recreation Department did a live stream on yesterday of the Martin Luther King Day Service that was at the Tabernacle Baptist Church. So, the City of Petersburg did join efforts with Tabernacle Baptist. They did have it via Facebook and live stream. I just wanted to let you all know that the City of Petersburg did do something for Martin Luther King Day like we have done in the past. Thank you."

Council Member Myers, "Hey Mr. Mayor. I apologize to everybody. I do not have my camera on because I am out here at the job site, but I have been listening. So, I appreciate the opportunity to speak. But I agree with everyone. Black Lives Matter and we need to do more about our African American History in Petersburg. I think that everyone needs to look at it and reach out to Wayne Crocker so we can move forward with our new African American Museum that we are working towards at the old McKenny Library. So, keep in mind and in your hearts. And I appreciate everyone. I am sorry that I could not be there with you today but thank you for allowing me to comment."

14. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA:

*No items for this portion of the agenda.

15. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

a. City Council Rules of Council

BACKGROUND: No background information.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council approve the resolution of the Rules of Council with recommended changes.

Mrs. Benavides gave briefing on the proposed amended resolution of the Rules of Council.

Council Member Cuthbert made a motion to adopt the Rules of Council as proposed by the City Manager. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Smith-Lee.

There was discussion among City Council Members and staff.

*Audio available upon request.

Council Member Hill made a substitute motion to approve the resolution of the Rules of Council with amendments presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Wilson-Smith. The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Hill, Smith-Lee, and Parham; Absent: Myers and Hart

21-R-11 A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE RULES OF COUNCIL WITH APPROVED CHANGES.

16. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Consideration to appropriate funding in the amount of \$382,494.45 for the COVID-19 Municipal Utility Relief Program that was awarded to the City of Petersburg by the Virginia Department of Housing & Urban Development – 2nd Reading

BACKGROUND: Virginia has allocated additional federal Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) available pursuant to the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES Act) for the purpose of allowing municipal utilities providing electric, gas, water, and wastewater services to set up local utility relief programs for their customers impacted by COVID-19.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that City Council approves the appropriation.

India Adams-Jacobs, Assistant to the City Manager, gave a PowerPoint on the Utility Relief Program.

There was discussion among City Council and staff.

Council Member Cuthbert made a motion to approve the appropriation using Option B. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Smith-Lee. The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hill, Smith-Lee, and Parham; Absent: Hart

21-ORD-7 AN ORDINANCE, AS AMENDED, SAID ORDINANCE MAKING APPROPRIATION FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING ON JULY 1, 2020 AND ENDING ON JUNE 30, 2021 IN THE GRANTS FUND IN THE AMOUNT OF \$382,494.45.

- b. Consideration of an appropriation in the amount of \$84,105 for Right-of-Way Acquisition Services for the South Crater Road Traffic Signal Improvement Project being conducted by Kimley Horn – 2nd Reading

BACKGROUND: The Virginia Department of Elections today announced the distribution of \$9 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding, granted specifically to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, domestically or internationally, for the 2020 federal election cycle.

The Department of Elections is notifying local voter registration offices that CARES Act funding may be used for a number of expenses related to COVID-19 for the November 2020 federal elections only. These funds may be used toward any expenditures related to the protection of the health and safety of poll workers, staff, and voters during the federal election as well as those resulting from anticipated increased demand for absentee ballots by mail costs (e.g., printing ballots, printing envelopes, postage, etc.), equipment and temporary staff. Local voter registration offices may also utilize the funding for voter outreach to include mailings, public service announcements, etc. Funds cannot be utilized for items that would be needed regardless of the COVID-19 pandemic.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend City Council approve the attached appropriation ordinance

*Audio available upon request.

in the amount of \$84,105. It should be noted that this project is being administered by the Engineering Division of the Department of Public Works using VDOT Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) funds that will reimburse the City expenditures at a rate of 100%.

Tangela Innis, Director of Public Utilities, gave a briefing on the request for appropriation.

Council Member Hill made a motion to approve the appropriation ordinance in the amount of \$84,105. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Smith-Lee.

Mayor Parham opened the floor for public comments.

Seeing no hands, Mayor Parham closed public comments.

The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hart, Hill, Smith-Lee, and Parham; Absent: Hart

21-ORD-8 AN ORDINANCE, AS AMENDED, SAID ORDINANCE MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING JULY 1, 2020, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2021 FOR THE GENERAL FUND IN THE AMOUNT OF \$84,105.

- c. Consideration of an appropriation for a grant from the Historic African American Cemetery and Graves Grant in the amount of \$1,865– 2nd Reading

BACKGROUND: At the beginning of each state fiscal year on July 1, Department of Historical Resources (DHR) announces the availability of funds for the care and maintenance of historical African American cemeteries and graves, defined by Virginia Code (§10.1-2211.2) as “a cemetery that was established prior to January 1, 1900, for the interment of African Americans.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend approving and appropriate the \$1,865 grant that was awarded to the City to maintain the graves at the People’s Memorial Cemetery.

Mrs. Benavides gave a briefing on the request of approval for the appropriation ordinance.

Council Member Hill made a motion to approve 1,865 grant that was awarded to the City to maintain the graves at the People’s Memorial Cemetery. The motion was seconded by Council Member Myers.

Mayor Parham opened the floor for public comments.

Seeing no hands, Mayor Parham closed public comments.

There was discussion among City Council and staff. The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hart, Hill, Smith-Lee, and Parham; Absent: Hart

21-ORD-9 AN ORDINANCE, AS AMENDED, SAID ORDINANCE MAKING APPROPRIATION FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING ON JULY 1, 2020 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2021 IN THE GRANTS FUND IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,865.

- d. Consideration of an appropriation for a grant in the amount of \$80,926 for the expansion funding for the Comprehensive Community Corrections Act & Pretrial Services Act.

BACKGROUND: Local community-based probation agencies were created in 1995 by the

*Audio available upon request.

Comprehensive Community Corrections Act (CCCA, §9.1-173 COV). They were created to provide an alternative to incarceration for persons convicted of certain misdemeanors or non-violent felonies for which sentences would be 12 months or less in a local or regional jail. Local community-based probation services agencies provide the following services: community service; home incarceration with or without electronic monitoring; electronic monitoring; and substance abuse screening, assessment, testing and treatment.

Pretrial Services were first created in Virginia in 1989, pursuant to authorizing language in the Appropriations Act. In 1995, Pretrial Services Agencies were authorized by statute with the passage of the Pretrial Services Act (PSA, § 19.2-152.2 COV). Pretrial services agencies provide information and investigative services to judicial officers (judges and magistrates) to help them decide whether persons charged with certain offenses and awaiting trial need to be held in jail or can be released to their communities subject to supervision.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend City Council approve the funding from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services for the CCCA & PSA.

Mrs. Benavides gave a briefing on the request for approval of the appropriation ordinance.

Council Member Hill made a motion to approve the appropriation ordinance in the amount of \$80,926. The motion was seconded by Council Member Myers.

Mayor Parham opened the floor for public comments.

Seeing no hands, Mayor Parham closed public comments.

There was discussion among City Council and staff. The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hart, Hill, Smith-Lee, and Parham; Absent: Hart

21-ORD-10 AN ORDINANCE, AS AMENDED, SAID ORDINANCE MAKING APPROPRIATION FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING ON JULY 1, 2020 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2021 IN THE GRANTS FUND IN THE AMOUNT OF \$80,926.

- e. Consideration of the carrying forward of the FY2019-20 amount \$371,969 for the CDBG-CVI Cares Act to be appropriated for FY2020-21 for the Coronavirus Pandemic due to the City of Petersburg.

BACKGROUND: The City of Petersburg is a HUD CDBG entitlement jurisdiction. As an entitlement jurisdiction and due to the coronavirus pandemic, the City of Petersburg's CDBG entitlement program has received CDBG CV CARES Act funding totaling \$371,969.00. To receive these funds, the City is required by HUD to amend the PY2019 CDBG Annual Action Plan. These funds will be used to prepare, prevent, and respond to the pandemic in an expedited manner, while meeting CDBG national objectives. Project activities may include the following:

- Carry out job training to expand the pool of health care workers and technicians that are available to treat disease within a community.
- Provide testing, diagnosis, or other services at a fixed or mobile location.
- Increase the capacity and availability of targeted health services for infectious disease response within existing health facilities.
- Provide equipment, supplies, and materials necessary to carry-out a public service.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend that City Council approve the carry forward amount of \$371,969 to FY2020-21.

Mrs. Benavides gave a briefing on the appropriation ordinance in the amount of \$371,969.

*Audio available upon request.

Vice Mayor Smith-Lee made a motion to approve the carry forward amount of \$371,969 to FY2020-21. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hill.

Mayor Parham opened the floor for public comment.

Barbara Rudolph, 1675 Mt. Vernon Street, stated, "I think in the interest of transparency, we should perhaps talk about when this was passed in June and it was discussed a few times subsequently, I believe that this was told to council and to the public that this was being used for the first round of small business assistance loans for COVID. Apparently, maybe those expenses were moved to the CRF, the other kind of CARES Act funding. But it has not been explained, and I think that if you go back in your minutes you will find that most of this money, there were reports shown being spent for small business assistance. Thank you."

Mrs. Benavides stated, "Mrs. Rudolph is correct. We did utilize after we received the COVID CARES funding we utilized the bulk for CARES and only a small portion for CDBG. But it still has the usage for this fiscal year to be used for other sources to include small business support in addition. Ms. Tyus can talk a little bit more. She has been the project manager on these funding."

Ms. Tyus stated, "Good afternoon again council. As the manager explained and as Mrs. Rudolph referenced, we used the CARES ACT funding for things that were appropriate. Which would reserve the CDBG funds because they had a different time stamp on them. A major part of what you originally approved this for it had three parts to it, contact tracers, small business assistance as well as a reset form. We hired five contact tracers for the health department. And a part of this significant amount of funding will serve to support those contact tracers to the end of this fiscal year."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "Can we please by the second meeting in February have a document which shows each grant that we have obtained, what each grant actually paid for and any amount that were left over from each grant. And when it is due back to the government of what is left. Can we do that?"

Mrs. Benavides stated, "We will have this part of the financial presentation on the new agenda. Also, I believe, I do not know if I said this but the date that we knew was going to be extended has now officially been extended for not only the CARES funding but everything until the end of this fiscal year. So, there is nothing due back right now, but we will get you an update at the next meeting on where we are with the CARES funding."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "Thank you."

The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Smith-Lee, Hill, and Parham; Abstain: Myers; Absent: Hart

21-ORD-11 AN ORDINANCE, AS AMENDED, SAID ORDINANCE MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING JULY 1, 2020, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2021 FOR THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUND.

f. Consideration of a nomination to the Crater Regional Workforce Development Board.

BACKGROUND: Ms. Amanda Habansky is the Chief Operating Officer with People's Advantage Credit Union in Petersburg, VA.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend City Council Members approve the nomination of Ms. Amanda Habansky to the Crater Regional Workforce Development Board for a term of July 1, 2020 -June 30, 2023.

*Audio available upon request.

Council Member Myers made a motion to approve the nomination of Ms. Amanda Habansky to the Crater Regional Workforce Development Board for a term of July 1, 2020 -June 30, 2023. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hill. The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hill, Smith-Lee, and Parham; Absent: Hart

17. CITY MANAGER'S AGENDA:

Mrs. Benavides stated, "Just a note that the City of Petersburg will be open tomorrow. A lot of jurisdictions are closing down staff will be onsite. The buildings are still not open to the public, but we are not shutting down City Hall down tomorrow."

18. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM THE CLERK:

*No items for this portion of the agenda.

19. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM CITY ATTORNEY:

Mr. Williams stated, "You may recall several months ago, council adopted a resolution supporting staff efforts to address the conditions of the old Ramada building. Since that time, building code official and his staff have conducted a preliminary inspection of the property and the public areas outside of the property. They also retained a consulting firm to help them in these efforts. They culminated a short while ago with Inspector Shupps sending a notice to Mr. Harrison, which would be the first step if the City were to seek administrative inspection warrant requesting his voluntary authorization for us to enter on the property to try and determine if there are an unsafe condition upon that property. Mr. Harrison did cooperate at that request and did authorize the City to enter upon the property for that purpose, which was done today. And today we met in my office about 8:30am. It was me; the Code Inspector staff as well as the engineering consultants from Moseley. We met at the scene and we met with the police department to go through the building and clear the building for our entry into the building. We were accompanied also by the legal representative for Mr. Harrison as well as an engineering consultant that he had hired. I want to give you an update of the police entering and making sure it was safe. Once the officers entered the building, we stood on the outside of the building assessing the exterior. They were in there for about 30 to 45 minutes going floor to floor on the property. The property is riddled with graffiti and other issues with the exterior. A lot of us wore respiratory gear to make sure that the air quality was safe. There is an open elevator shaft and some other issues that we found. We expect to get a preliminary report back from the consultants that we hired. Once we have that in hand, I have spoken with the attorney for Mr. Harrison and we hope to meet with his client and the City Manager and I via zoom in the coming weeks to discuss the path forward. I will keep you updated as this progress. That is all that I have."

Council Member Cuthbert stated, "Mr. Williams, what is the timetable for getting those reports that you referenced and what is the timetable for the meeting with Mr. Harrison's team."

Mr. Williams stated, "Again, our consultants understand the fact that the City wants to ensure the safety of the building, so they are expediting to get it done. It is also a major project that we hope to make sure that we do everything right. In terms of giving, you a timeline, I do not think that I can give you that right now. I do believe that we will have it in the very near future. Soon as we get it, we will provide that to you."

Council Member Cuthbert stated, "Well would you give us an update please at our first meeting at the work session?"

Mr. Williams stated, "Yes sir."

*Audio available upon request.

Council Member Cuthbert stated, "Would you do that please? Thank you."

20. ADJOURNMENT:

City Council adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

Clerk of City Council

APPROVED:

Mayor