

The work session meeting of the Petersburg City Council was held on Tuesday, February 1, 2022, in a virtual meeting. Mayor Parham called the meeting to order at 5:22 p.m.

**1. ROLL CALL:**

Present:

Council Member Charles H. Cuthbert, Jr.  
Council Member Treska Wilson-Smith  
Council Member Arnold Westbrook, Jr  
Council Member Darrin Hill  
Vice Mayor Annette Smith-Lee  
Mayor Samuel Parham

Absent: Council Member W. Howard Myers

Present from City Council Administration:

Clerk of City Council Nykesha D. Jackson  
City Manager Stuart Turille, Jr  
City Attorney Anthony C. Williams

**2. PRAYER:**

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

Council Member Hill led the council meeting in prayer.

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

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

**4. DETERMINATION OF THE PRESENCE OF A QUORUM:**

A quorum is present. Council Member Myers was absent.

**5. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA (TO INCLUDE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING/S):**

- a. Consideration of a Department of Criminal Justice Services Grant in the amount of \$15,972 – 1<sup>st</sup> Reading
- b. A request to schedule a public hearing to amend Sec. 106-14. – Permanent Board of Equalization.
- c. Minutes:  
January 12, 2022 – Special City Council Meeting  
January 18, 2022 – Closed Session City Council Meeting  
January 18, 2022 – Regular City Council Meeting

Council Member Hill made a motion to approve the consent agenda. 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, Westbrook, Hill, Smith-Lee, and Parham; Absent: Myers

**6. SPECIAL REPORTS:**

- a. South Park Mall Data from Petersburg Area Transit

\*Audio available upon request.

Darius Mason, Petersburg Area Transit System Manager, and Charles Koonce, Director of Mass Transit, gave PowerPoint presentation on the data.

Key points:

- A graph was done on the entire year of 2021.
- In January 2021 there was a total of 2,002 passengers.
- 1,498 of the passengers were daily riders and 504 were passengers that were going to work. That was a 20% rate of passengers.
- In July 2021, there was a total of 2,096 passengers to catch the South Park Mall bus. 1,629 were daily shoppers and 467 were passengers going to work.
- January 2, 2021, South Park Mall had a total of 98 riders for that day. 23% of the riders were riders going to work.
- January 4, 2021, South Park Mall had a total of 96 riders for that day. 23% of those riders were going to work.
- January 6, 2021, South Park Mall had a total of 73 passengers. 17% of those passengers were going to work.
- There was a survey done in 2018, for all the routes. There is a blank copy being shown. And the survey was done by Kimley Horne Group.
- The survey was used to produce transit strategies. The Strategic Plan was started out in 2018. It was completed December 2021 by City Council approval.

**7. MONTHLY REPORTS:**

\*There are no items for this portion of the agenda.

**8. FINANCE AND BUDGET REPORT:**

\*There are no items for this portion of the agenda.

**9. CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE:**

\*There are no items for this portion of the agenda.

**10. UTILITIES:**

- a. Wastewater Presentation by Timmons Group regarding stormwater interconnections, Poor Creek Wastewater Project, and Inflow and Infiltration (I&I)

Andrew Barnes, City Engineer and General Manager of Utilities, and Kenneth Turner, gave a brief update with a PowerPoint presentation.

Key points:

- The city memo from 2005 documented peak sewer flow of 27.5 MGD.
- Average Daily Flow was 4.8 MGD with a peaking factor greater than 6.
- City took initiative to eliminate combined sewer.
- Peak flow was reduced, but some combined sewers remain.
- In 2018, city contribution to SCWWTP flow increased by 7% to 62%.
- City had Timmons complete a report on combined sewer in Old Towne.
- Smoke testing was performed.

\*Audio available upon request.

- Limited flow monitoring was documented.
- Limited CCTV work was completed.
- Some defects were found and summarized in final report. Some repairs and remediation have been completed.
- Currently Petersburg Allocation of SCWWTP capacity is 59%.
- Some of the defects were 100 River Street interconnection/collapse, 100 River Street sewer lateral disconnected from storm drain, Old Street near Exchange Alley, Perry Street Lofts High Street storm drains, Grove Avenue near Cross Street storm drains, Hanover Street near W. Augusta Avenue, and sewer pipes located in streams.
- Since 2018, the city has worked on find-and-fix problems identified above.
- Variations in annual rainfall determine the extent of flow increases in the sanitary sewer system.
- Petersburg share if SCWWTP capacity 59%.
- Petersburg average day demand has remained similar since 2018 at 4.8 MGD.
- The city continues to work on decreasing peak flow in the sewer system from system interconnection.

There was no discussion among staff and council on the presentation.

Council Member Cuthbert asked Mr. Turille can he come back to City Council with some game plan for moving forward and an interim report as to how the city can get their arms around the cross-connection problem at the work session in April.

Mr. Turille stated that he can do that as requested.

There was continued discussion among city council and staff.

Council Member Cuthbert stated that he would like to see the operating cost per month to the city is to get the 11 employees to and from work and to get the 33 shoppers to Colonial Heights. He would like that number to be brought back to city council at the February meeting or March work session.

Mr. Turille stated that staff can get that information back as requested.

**11. STREETS:**

\*There are no items for this portion of the agenda.

**12. FACILITIES:**

\*There are no items for this portion of the agenda.

**13. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

\*There are no items for this portion of the agenda.

**14. CITY MANAGER'S AGENDA:**

Mr. Turille gave a PowerPoint presentation.

Key points:

\*Audio available upon request.

- They are currently reviewing a possible reorganization from Economic Development to Communication/Marketing/Government relations department.
- There is a meeting this Friday between public works and the police on speeding. Plan requires some implementation of strategic targeting, installation of speed mitigation devices, and strategic on-site patrols for direct enforcement.
- The new Fire Chief, Tina Watkins, was sworn in on January 31, 2022, and began work today.
- There are two interviews scheduled for the Human Resource Director position.
- The city is in receipt of resumes for the public works director.
- The new budget year is underway. Department Head submission are in, and one-on-one meetings are nearly completed.
- There will be a special meeting on February 8, 2022, for nonprofits and outside agencies to have a chance to make a short presentation regarding the needs for city support. This is a one-time request to preclude numerous requests the city receives throughout the year for assistance from NPOs.
- The compensation and classification request for proposals went out. The study is estimated to be completed in September and it will determine the clear guidelines to improve the situation with wage compression, internal and external pay equity.
- The city is reviewing health agent applications to appoint a health agent as a negotiating tool to reduce the medical costs to the city and staff.
- This year's budget will require use of the revenue neutral statute, due to the 13% increase in tax base, as per assessor's last report. This should lead to a real property tax rate reduction.

Mr. Turille stated, "I did have one thing. A letter came into me after I wrote up this report. The Department of Social Services Office of Children Services is looking for a representative to serve on the Community Policy and Management Team. This board oversees the Petersburg Children's Services Act. The community policy and management team create the collaborative system of services, child centered family focused, and community based and addressing the needs of troubled and at risk youth and families. So, they are looking for a representative that can come from staff or elected officials. So, any volunteers I can email this letter. But they are looking for an elected official or appointed designee to serve on the team. If there is anyone interested, please contact me."

Mayor Parham stated, "Council Member Cuthbert has his hand up. I think that he is interested."

Council Member Cuthbert stated, "Well thank you Mr. Mayor. Your kind to think of me. I was going to ask whether a council appointee could be a citizen."

Mr. Turille stated, "It does say here that they need at least one elected official or appointed official or designee from the governing body. So, a designee, I read that to be yes. Anyone that you may designate."

Mrs. Innis stated, "Mayor, Members of Council and City Manager, I would like to be designated for this as well. As Mr. Turille see so appropriate."

Mr. Turille stated, "That is fine with me. I received a letter and clearly there is a need for someone from the city on the team. Okay, Mrs. Innis can do it unless you have a citizen in mind."

Council Member Cuthbert stated, "No. I think that is fine and generous of Mrs. Innis to volunteer. So, I think that answers my question."

Mayor Parham stated, "Mr. Turille any other items?"

\*Audio available upon request.

Mr. Turille stated, "No. That concludes it for me."

**15. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM THE CLERK:**

\*No items for this portion of the agenda.

**16. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM THE CITY ATTORNEY:**

Mr. Williams stated, "No items. Just a follow up to Council Member Cuthbert question. It does have to be an elected official or an employee of the city per the statute. A designee likewise has to be elected or an employee of the city."

**17. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Barbara Rudolph, 1675 Mt. Vernon Street, stated, "I have got my real estate notice of change and assessment yesterday. As did a lot of other citizens. And it is overall, my taxes are going up 5.73% which is expectable to me. It is going to be \$30 dollars every quarter. So, I am not talking about that. But it is the way that this was arrived at that is extremely puzzling. I feel like those assessments, we should be able to see the equity, the logics and the changes are. I will just give mines as one example. It is not the only. My land assessment went from \$35,600 up to \$80,000. That is a 125% increase which the 100% increase is doubling. This is a 125% increase. At the same time my improvements and structures decreased by 30% and over \$35,000. So, that result was a slight increase. So, I questioned it and so I asked other citizens. It turns out that in the Walnut Hill and Overbrook area there has been an increase in land assessments. People's assessment for land are going up to \$40,000, \$60,000, \$80,000, and even one example of \$100,000. It is kind of like those are plug figures based on what percent of an acre you have. Other than being calculated off some specific land measurement. When I looked at the East Walnut Hill area there was some minor increases in assessment and land. But they seemed to be tied more to the prorated. A different methodology was used. Then we looked at Poplar Lawn and Old Towne and the properties that I learned about out there had no increases in land assessment. And one can think that maybe their land is overvalued, and Walnut Hill was undervalued, and it was to equalize. It does not appear to be the case. Now I recognize that the assessor breaks up the city in many discrete neighborhoods. And that there are different variable that effect different parts of the city. I understand that. I am only talking about residential. But I have been hearing from people that some folk's taxes increased by \$1,500 a year, \$2,000 a year and even \$4,000 a year. And these are not the most expensive houses in Petersburg. This middle-class Petersburg not upper-class Petersburg. I think that some of you particularly in wards 3 and 4 are hearing from a lot of your constituents. And I think that the assessor's office would be well served with providing a briefing of how they came up with these figures. People are totally puzzled, and it just does not seem to be a consistent direction that is being taken other than... Let me mention one more thing. I know that my time has run out but hearing a lot about having this big increase in real estate revenue because of the increase in value. And we are going to offset that by a cut in the tax rate. That is all well and good but for the folks, we are not going to have individual tax rate and adjustments. But somebody's tax rate that is doubled you would have to have the tax rate cut from 1.35 per hundred to \$0.6750 per hundred to customize tax rate. Just be aware. It is good news at the aggregate level but the individual level there is a going to be a whole lot of problems of assessment reviews. Thank you."

Marcus Omar Squire, 1701 Monticello Street, stated, "I am coming here today in front of you all to talk about the old Ian's Hall building off Sycamore Street. Which was apart of the old hospital complex. Currently there is a proposal for the possibility of lab schools throughout the commonwealth. And one of the labs would have to go in a disadvantaged locality. I am hoping that the leaders of Petersburg will look into this. I know that there are talks underway to have the old hospital site looked at in regard to putting in a state lab and other biotech industries on to that site. I think a lab school on that site might help lure in more potential biotech

\*Audio available upon request.

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companies. And I am also going to talk to you guys about Cameron Field. I am not sure if you guys have seen the retaining wall in front of the old field house at Cameron Field. But it is collapsing, and the wall in front of the field house doors are collapsing to Lieutenants Run. So, something needs to be done or else the field house is going to fall into Lieutenants Run. And I was over at Fire Station 3 the other day and I was looking at the tower. There is a very large crack in the masonry. I reached out at the fire department, and they told me that they were looking for a proposal from a contractor. I called into the city late yesterday and the individual in the RFP office said that there wasn't. So, I am wondering what is going on with the tower at Fire Station 3. And is the city actually using the grant funds properly for People's Memorial Cemetery. And is the city going to look at repairing the old train station and city hall. It is falling apart. And we cannot forget the Peabody Complex. Because if you have driven by Peabody or you have seen Peabody you know that it is falling apart, and it is something that the city really needs to stop ignoring because it is part of our cultural heritage in Petersburg. I would say that Petersburg is a city with 400 years of American history and over 2,000 years of architectural history and heritage. So, let's keep that alive in Petersburg. Thank you for your time and consideration."

**18. ADJOURNMENT:**

Council Member Hill stated, "Mr. Mayor, can I have a moment of council privilege real fast. At our next work session can I get the City Assessor in so that he can describe his formula the way that he came up with the assessments and kind of break it down. I did get a couple of phone calls today myself. I know that we direct him. So, let's tell him that our next work session be ready to present."

City Council adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

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Clerk of City Council

APPROVED:

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Mayor