

The regular meeting of the Petersburg City Council was held on Tuesday, April 16, 2019, at the Union Train Station. Mayor Parham called the meeting to order at 6:30p.m.

**1. ROLL CALL:**

Present:

Council Member Charles H. Cuthbert, Jr.  
Council Member Annette Smith-Lee  
Council Member Treska Wilson-Smith  
Council Member W. Howard Myers  
Council Member Darrin Hill  
Vice Mayor John A. Hart, Sr.  
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 that Council Member Hill will do the opening prayer.

Council Member Hill led the council meeting in prayer.

Mayor Parham stated, "At this time I would like to represent Nathaniel Collie, who is here from Liberia. You know Petersburg had the first President of Liberia, Mr. Joseph Jenkins Roberts. And Mr. Collie is here today as the Liberian designee of the America Colonization Society of Economic Development Commission of Liberia. Please give Mr. Collie a round of applause for coming here from Liberia."

Mr. Collie stated that he brings greetings, thanks and congratulations.

**3. CLOSED SESSION:**

City Attorney Anthony C. Williams stated that the Mayor would entertain a motion to intervene into closed session pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A (7) of the Code of Virginia, 1950 as amended, council will be in closed session for the purpose of receiving legal advice and status update from the City Attorney and legal consultation regarding the subject of specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by the City Attorney and matters of actual or probable litigation specifically including but not limited to matters requiring legal advice by the City Attorney.

Council Member Myers moved that the City Council go into closed session for the purposes noted by the City Attorney. The motion was seconded by Council Member Cuthbert.

Council Member Cuthbert stated, "I second the motion but I did not hear anything about real estate. Was that mentioned Mr. Williams?"

Mr. Williams stated, "No, sir."

\*Audio available upon request.

Council Member Cuthbert made an amended motion that they expand the purpose of the closed session to include a discussion of the City's position concerning real estate matters that may involve litigation. The motion was seconded by Council Member Myers.

There was no discussion on the motion, which was approved on roll call vote.

On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Smith-Lee, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hill, Hart and Parham

City Council entered closed session at 6:38 p.m.

**CERTIFICATION:**

Mr. Williams stated that City Council now moves to come out of closed session and certify that only public business matters lawfully exempted from an open meeting requirement pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and only such business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed session was called were discussed during in the closed meeting. He stated that if any member believes that there was a departure from the forth going shall state for the record the substance of the departure at which anyone believes has occurred and that it requires a roll call vote.

Council Member Hill made a motion to return City Council into open session and certify the purposes of the closed session. The motion was seconded by Council Member Myers.

The motion was approved on roll call vote.

On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Smith-Lee, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hill, Hart and Parham

**19-R-22      A RESOLUTION CERTIFYING, AS REQUIRED BY THE CODE OF VIRGINIA, SECTION 2.2-3712, THAT TO THE BEST OF EACH MEMBER'S KNOWLEDGE, ONLY PUBLIC BUSINESS MATTERS LAWFULLY EXEMPTED FROM OPEN MEETING REQUIREMENTS OF VIRGINIA LAW WERE DISCUSSED IN THE CLOSED SESSION, AND ONLY SUCH PUBLIC BUSINESS MATTERS AS WERE IDENTIFIED IN THE MOTION CONVENING THE CLOSED SESSION WERE HEARD, DISCUSSED, OR CONSIDERED.**

City Council returned to open session at 8:15pm.

**4.      MOMENT OF SILENCE:**

Ms. Jackson led council and the audience in a moment of silence.

**5.      PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Ms. Jackson led council and the audience in the pledge of allegiance.

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

All City Council Members were present.

**7.      PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATION OF CEREMONIAL PROCLAMATIONS:**

a.      Proclamation proclaiming May as Business Appreciation Month

\*Audio available upon request.

**BACKGROUND:** The City of Petersburg has annually celebrated local business since 1998 with a business appreciation celebration. The City has observed Business Appreciation Month since State observance began in 2014. In so doing, the City highlights and host events throughout the month that acknowledge and celebrate the contribution of local businesses to the Petersburg community.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Recommend Mayor Parham read and present the proclamation.

Mayor Parham read and presented Reggie Tabor and Thaddeus Huff with the proclamation.

Thaddeus Huff, President and CEO of the Petersburg Chamber of Commerce stated, "I just want to thank you for having us. You are seeing a listing of all the events that we are trying to put on as a community. The City, Reggie and I with the Chamber of Commerce wanted to make sure that we are putting together a kind of program that will fit with all kinds of entrepreneurs and show that we have a cohesive system here in Petersburg. So, we are really working towards that. What you see in front of you we have at least one event each week in the month of May. Hopefully, we will move forward with more partners as we have a more cohesive system in the long run. So, we just wanted to present that to you as part of the appreciation month for businesses."

## **8. COMMUNICATIONS/SPECIAL REPORTS:**

a. City Assessor Report – Brian Gordineer, AAS, City Assessor

Mr. Gordineer stated that he has no items.

b. City Manager Report – Aretha R. Ferrell-Benavides, City Manager

Mrs. Benavides stated, "Thanks mayor and Council. What we discussed if it is appropriate for us to continue at this time the budget workshop."

Mayor Parham stated, "Yes, it is. Can I get a motion from council to proceed with the budget workshop questions that Council Member Wilson-Smith and others had?"

Council Member Wilson-Smith made a motion to proceed with all of the questions and concerns with the budget workshop. The motion was seconded by Council Member Cuthbert. The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Smith-Lee, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hill, Hart and Parham

Mrs. Benavides went through the expenditures of the budget in the PowerPoint presentation.

Michael Rogers, Chief Financial Officer, gave a brief overview of the highlights in the budget presentation of general government.

Key points:

1. Executive assistant to the City manager's salary (50%) is budgeted under City Council salary due to her being a backup for clerk of council.
2. The City pays 50% of the health insurance cost for employees.
3. Monies from other contractual services were split and put in travel and lodging for City Council Members.
4. City Manager unfunded assistant two position in her budget for cost savings for a FOIA officer.
5. City Assessor budget went up to house a GIS position in their department.

Chief Miller, Mr. Lyons, Ms. Tyus and Mr. Stevenson gave a briefing of their budget for the proposed

\*Audio available upon request.

budget.

There was discussion among City Council and staff.

c. Special Report from Virginia Municipal League – Legislative Issues

Michelle Gowdy, Executive Director of Virginia Municipal League, gave a brief report of the legislative issues from Virginia Municipal League. She gave information on a Conflict of Interest training that has to be completed by December 30, 2019, by local officials. She stated that this can be taken online.

d. Presentation sharing the Stabilization to Revitalize Initiative

Mr. Lyons stated, “Though this information is in your packet, along with Councilman Cuthbert, we have asked that this item be moved to your May 7<sup>th</sup> agenda. Because we have some additional due diligence that we need to do, and it will also free up some time for you all.”

e. Update from the Commissioner of Revenue – Brittany Flowers

Ms. Flowers gave an update on the Commission of Revenue office.

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

- a. Minutes: City Council Meeting: March 19, 2019
- b. Minutes: Special City Council Meeting of April 1, 2019
- c. Request to schedule a public hearing on revisions to the City Code regarding Signage in the Right of Way.
- d. Request to schedule a public hearing to amend and readopt Sections 2-174 and 2-175 of the City of Petersburg Code of Ordinances pertaining to the duties of the Collector of Taxes and his/her deputies.
- e. Request to schedule a public hearing to adopt and incorporate Section 2-192 of the City of Petersburg Code of Ordinances.
- f. Request to schedule a public hearing on the proposed new utility rate.

Council Member Myers made a motion to approve the consent agenda and schedule public hearings for May 7, 2019. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Hart. There was discussion on the motion. The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Smith-Lee, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hill, Hart and Parham

**10. OFFICIAL PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

- a. A public hearing to receive citizen comment on the addition of Sec. 106-130. – Rehabilitated real estate located in the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Commercial Line Railroad Commercial and Industrial Federal and Historic District.

**BACKGROUND:** The proposed addition of Sec. 106-130. – Rehabilitated real estate located in the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Commercial Line Railroad Commercial and Industrial Federal and Historic District is a housekeeping addition for an ordinance that was adopted on February 16, 2016. The addition presented is consistent with the other ordinances for rehabilitated real estate.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Recommend City Council approve the proposed changes.

\*Audio available upon request.

Brian Gordineer, City Assessor, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed changes.

Ms. Jackson opened the floor for public comments.

Sara Melissa Witiak, 22 Centre Hill Court, stated, "I read the document that was in the previous agenda and it seems like there was a lot of language that said that the City would be liable for damages and so forth. But I did not see anything in there where the leaser or person leasing the land or using the land would be responsible for something like a spill. I know they carry mulch and sulfur on the trains quite a bit. I just worry about the proximity to the Appomattox River and where anybody using that land would be held accountable for any sort of spill or environmental damage. Thank you."

Seeing no further hands, Ms. Jackson closed the public hearing.

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

**19-ORD-16 AN ORDINANCE OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO SEC. 106-130. – REHABILITATED REAL ESTATE LOCATED IN THE ATLANTIC COAST LINE RAILROAD COMMERCIAL LINE RAILROAD COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL FEDERAL AND HISTORIC DISTRICT.**

- b. A public hearing to add Sec. 106-70. – Abatement of levies on buildings razed, destroyed or damaged.

**BACKGROUND:** The proposed addition of Sec. 106-70. – Abatement of levies on buildings razed, destroyed or damaged will allow the City Assessor's Office to lower the assessed value of buildings razed, destroyed or damaged by a fortuitous happening beyond the control of the owner for the period beyond thirty days that the building is uninhabitable.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Recommend City Council approve the proposed changes.

Brian Gordineer, City Assessor, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed changes.

Ms. Jackson opened the floor for public comments.

Seeing no hands, Ms. Jackson closed the public hearing.

There was discussion among City Council and staff.

Council Member Myers made a motion that City Council approve the proposed changes. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hill. The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Smith-Lee, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hill, Hart and Parham

**19-ORD-17 AN ORDINANCE OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO ADD SEC. 106-70. – ABATEMENT OF LEVIES ON BUILDINGS RAZED, DESTROYED OR DAMAGED.**

- c. A public hearing to receive citizen comment on the amend Sec. 106-138. – Miscellaneous exemptions.

**BACKGROUND:** The proposed amendments to **Sec. 106-138. - Miscellaneous exemptions.** will

\*Audio available upon request.

provide the process by which property owners should seek exemption of real property with the City Assessor's Office.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Recommend City Council approve the proposed changes.

Brian Gordineer, City Assessor, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed changes.

Ms. Jackson opened the floor for public comments.

Ron Flock, 1708 Pender Avenue, stated, "I just wanted to say that I think that it is important to have this procedure laid out before you just give a blank check away. That was just my thought. Thank you."

Seeing no further hands, Ms. Jackson closed the public hearing.

Council Member Hill made a motion that City Council approve the proposed changes. The motion was seconded by Council Member Myers. The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Smith-Lee, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hill, Hart and Parham

**19-ORD-18 AN ORDINANCE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SEC. 106-138. - MISCELLANEOUS EXEMPTIONS.**

- d. A public hearing to receive citizen comment on the amend Sec. 106-82. – Application for classification, assessment, etc., generally.

**BACKGROUND:** The proposed amendments to Sec. 106-82. – Application for classification, assessment, etc., generally. will provide for an initial application fee and revalidation fee that will be charged every six years for those seeking special assessment based on agricultural, horticultural and forest use.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Recommend City Council approve the proposed changes.

Brian Gordineer, City Assessor, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed changes.

Ms. Jackson opened the floor for public comments.

Seeing no hands, Ms. Jackson closed the public hearing.

Vice Mayor Hart made a motion that City Council approve the proposed changes. The motion was seconded by Council Member Myers. The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Smith-Lee, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hill, Hart and Parham

**19-ORD-19 AN ORDINANCE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SEC. 106-138. - MISCELLANEOUS EXEMPTIONS.**

- e. A public hearing to hear the CDBG recommendations for the Program year of 2019-2020.

**BACKGROUND:** Petersburg, Virginia is an entitlement jurisdiction for the annual receipt of CDBG funds from HUD. This requires the submission of the Consolidated and Annual Plan for the proposed uses of the funds to be received in FY2019-2020. Funds may be used to address one or more of the three national objectives for the program: Benefit of low- and moderate-income persons, aid in the Prevention or removal of blight or urgent needs.

\*Audio available upon request.

**Reprogrammed Funding from FY2017-2018 for FY2019-2020 Programs**

<b>Funding Source</b>		
17 CARES	\$519.85	
17 Serenity	\$100.10	
17 Project Homes	\$792.00	
17 Sidewalks	\$16.04	
17 Commercial Rehab Grant	\$5,000.00	
18 Code Enforcement	\$59,000.00	
18 Administration	\$65,572.01	
18 Demolition	\$50,000.00	
<b>Total of Funds Reprogrammed</b>	<b>\$181,000.00</b>	
Grant anticipated funds FY2019-2020 Programs	\$624,000.00	
Funds Reprogrammed from previous program years	\$181,000.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$805,000.00</b>	
<b>Proposed Allocated Funding for FY2019-2020</b>		
Hope Center		\$
Pathways to Employment		\$
Pretty Purposed		\$
CDBG Administration		\$90,000.00
Rebuilding Together		\$25,000.00
Project Homes		\$120,000.00
Code Enforcement		\$200,000.00
Pegram Street		\$120,000.00
Jarratt House		\$200,000.00
Unallocated Public Service		\$50,000.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$805,000.00</b>

**RECOMMENDATION:** Following a duly advertised public hearing, Council may affirm staff's recommendation; make changes to staff's recommendations or table for further consideration.

Michelle Peters, Director of Planning and Community Development, gave a brief overview and PowerPoint presentation.

Ms. Jackson opened the floor for public comments.

Ron Flock, 1708 Pender Avenue, stated, "There was a line on there for \$16.00. I do not know how far that will get you in sidewalks. I have got to know. Thank you."

Linwood Christian, 410 Mistletoe Street, stated, "I just want to say that I am almost like the director, I am almost at that point to ask you to fund the recommendations. And the reason why I say almost because there are two that are not on there that I really think serve a purpose to this City. One being CARES, although I wish I had especially with their clientele of homeless women and battered women. Everybody knows what that place is and if you have a woman that is fleeing for her life and 'you all seen my wife. Oh yeah she at the CARES building right there on the corner of Liberty Street and Halifax Street.' You are putting everybody else in danger. But however, being that you are not giving them a new building I would definitely ask that you find

\*Audio available upon request.

some way to give that organization some money along with Pathways. Why Pathways? Pathways deal with our young people. I remember some years ago a young man came here to introduce a program similar to Pathways and he was raked all over the coals. Now he is in Richmond doing a fantastic job, Mr. Kenneth Williams. We are quick to put our young people in jail. We are quick to shoot them, not our police department but somebody. We are quick to talk about what our young people don't do here about being constructive. And then things such as Pathways come along. Let's just help them out. Because how can we say that we care about our children when we don't do things to try to help them. There is another issue, but we will get to that too. Last but not least, if nothing else because there has been a lot of talk about Code Enforcement. We know because we have some council members and others who are connected to slumlords in our communities. And those Code Enforcement needs to shut them down. And so, we hope that if nothing else you all look out for code enforcement. Thank you."

Dr. Cheryl Riggins, Executive Director for CARES (Crisis Assistance Emergency Response Shelter), stated, "You are probably aware that CARES is not in the Tri-City area. It is the only shelter that provides the services that we do for homeless women and children. I come to you tonight and I didn't get to submit an application. I apologize it was three days late. But I did apply, and I am aware that it is there. And I thank you always for the support that you have given CARES for all these years. I ask again humbly that you remember CARES gain in our funding. We are receiving now more than in the prior year's more children who are coming to the shelter with their mothers. We often look at families and what constitutes a family and we are finding truly that a majority of the families and not just in Petersburg but in most Urban areas are women headed households. And so therefore we are finding that even with our partnership with some of the other agencies with rapid housing the number of women and families from Petersburg far out number those of any other jurisdictions. And we provide all of the services that they need to help them find a job and housing. And we have now included a program that will follow them for a year after they leave to assure that they maintain housing. Our application asks for \$56,000 but certainly we appreciate anything that you are able to allot for CARES. We really do need to keep our program alive and well. Thank you."

Richard Stewart, 129 Rolfe Street, stated, "As they call me, Mayor Parham, the unofficial Mayor of Pocahontas and you are the Mayor of Petersburg. But anyway, I am here tonight to speak about the Jarratt House. The Jarratt House is a very historical spot on Pocahontas Island, blight property. I have been trying to find something to get excited about. But this marks the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first slaves that came into Virginia. The Jarratt House was built in 1819, this is 200 years after the first slaves came into Jamestown. In Pocahontas we had free negroes, milatos, people from England and Native Americans. All that history is involved in that Jarratt House. For us to continue to let that house set there and deteriorate and fall into the streets, we are wasting time and history. What we need to do is that it is being funded and let's go through with it. Now, years from now when people ask you the question, what did you do for the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Free Slaves that came into Virginia, let it be that I funded the Jarratt House. I funded the Jarratt House. History that is going to live across forever and ever ad ev.er and ever. The Jarratt House, 1819, the history. Put that on your calendar and tell your kids and grandkids. Tell people that I for the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for the first slaves that came into Virginia, I funded the Jarratt House. Because it is one of the most historical spots in Petersburg that deal with multicultural and Native Americans, whites from England, Indians and you know one thing in my family The Stewart's own property next to the Jarratt House. So, we have to get busy too. Thank you."

Seeing no further hands, Ms. Jackson closed the public hearing.

There was discussion among staff and City Council Members.

Mayor Parham passed the gavel over to Vice Mayor Hart.

Mayor Parham made a motion to allocate \$20,000 to the YMCA for the continued education and fitness to support our youth. The money should come from the unallocated funds listed in the proposed budget of the

\*Audio available upon request.

CDBG program for the program year FY2019-2020. The motion was seconded by Council Member Myers. The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Smith-Lee, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hill, Hart and Parham

Council Member Myers made a motion to allocate \$20,000 to CARES for the continued support of services provided to mothers and families that need temporary housing and family stabilization. The money should come from the unallocated funds listed in the proposed budget of the CDBG program for the program year FY2019-2020. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hill. The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Smith-Lee, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hill, Hart and Parham

Council Member Cuthbert made a motion to adopt staff recommendation as to the other specific destinations starting with CDBG administration and going through the Jarratt House and leave \$10,000 for the City to allocate at later meeting of council. The motion was seconded by Council Member Wilson-Smith. The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Smith-Lee, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hill, Hart and Parham

- f. A public hearing to receive comment on 19-SUP-01: Request of Veritas Financial, LLC (Ray Ferguson, Jr) for a Special Use Permit pursuant to Article 23, Section 4 (13) of the Zoning Ordinance to operate a Bed & Breakfast Inn at 241 South Sycamore Street, T.P. 022-2-0011. The property is zoned "RB", Office-Apartment District, and located in the Poplar Lawn Historic District.

**BACKGROUND:** This request includes the establishment and operation of a bed and breakfast with ancillary events at the above-referenced location. The property was built in 1890 and is located in the locally designated Poplar Lawn Historic District and is subject to review and approval of the Architectural Review Board (ARB) for any exterior changes.

The proposed business concept for the use is to have a Bed and Breakfast, and the guest who are staying at the Bed and Breakfast can utilize the house or the lawn for events. The bed and breakfast is the principal use of the property, and the events are considered ancillary or accessory. This property cannot solely be used as an event venue. The property has five bedrooms, 4 full bathrooms and one-half bathroom, and is adjacent to Poplar Lawn City Park also known as Central Park.

This property has been occupied as a single-family residence and in 1997 was operated as a Bed and Breakfast Inn. A Special Use Permit was approved for Maria S. Spurrell to operate the Bed and Breakfast Inn, subject to certain conditions. This use permit was not transferrable. I have enclosed for your convenience the approved ordinance.

This case was heard before the Planning Commission twice, once on the February 6, 2019 agenda where the Planning Commission continued the case to allow the applicant to attend a Poplar Lawn Association meeting. The case was heard again during the March 6, 2019 Planning Commission meeting, where the Commission approved the request, subject to the conditions prepared by staff and added one additional condition. The additional condition was that the approval be granted for one year. The applicant would be required to go through the process again by applying with a new application, and an additional fee. The case would again be heard by the Planning Commission and City Council, there will need to be two public hearings held before a decision is given to allow continuation of the use.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends City Council approve the Special Use Permit with conditions.

\*Audio available upon request.

Mrs. Peters gave an update and overview of the request for a Special use Permit for 241 South Sycamore Street.

Ms. Jackson opened the floor for public comment.

Willie Noise, 1508 Circle Drive, stated, "One of my things that I tell you to watch out for and that is loopholes. Now this whole thing has gotten loopholes all over it. It has got too many people involved to hold one person accountable. And to mention a bed and breakfast and a party in the same sentence is going to cause somebody to be upset. How can you sleep when a party is going on? And you are also having established sound decimate. Because you talked about that and I don't even know if the police department have them. From what I heard they don't have them when they wrote tickets. Thank you."

Linwood Christian, 410 Mistletoe Street, stated, "Normally I would take the attitude and when we normally have stuff in our neighborhood whether the noise is bad, and no one seems to care, I would take that attitude. Being that folks don't care when it happens to us. But I do have to say this. A couple of things Mrs. Peters touched on. I too have to agree because number one even if you are looking at it from a safety issue. I don't care who is with pastor, present or anybody I would hope that they do get a signed agreement. Because one thing that bureaucrat, preachers, teachers or any believer hate is a paper trail. So, that I am just saying get it if you do it. One of the other reasons, again Mr. Noise talked about it is about the noise issue. Even in parts of the fourth ward we are still discussion that. But even if they were to go to First Baptist depending on which way they walk, that part of the street for better lack of terminology is hoe struck. And thank you all for catching it late. And then we don't want people car's getting broken into. Because I am quite sure there is a residence that is very active in social work. And I don't mean the type of social work that you legally get paid for. I would just suggest that if they do that whole thing with the safety really concerns me. Even if they park up and down Sycamore Street it is the new Interstate 95. I wouldn't want anybody to get out their car not realizing that a lot of people still drive drunk on Sycamore Street. We don't want anybody happening to those people. Those would be my only reservations. I still say that if they are going to use it as a bed and breakfast then use it as a bed and breakfast. The City does need some valuable convention facility here that is ours to call our own. Thank you."

Thomas Carwile, 250 S. Sycamore Street, stated, "Last month I spoke to the Planning Commission and voiced my concern to them about the special events part of this business plan of this bed and breakfast. I was concerned about the traffic and parking. If any of you had been in the vicinity of the corner Liberty and Sycamore Street last December when the Colonial Heights Chamber of Commerce had their Christmas Party, there you would know what I am talking about. It was very jammed up. People were honking their horns, there were near accidents and people having trouble finding a place to park. I think the parking has now been addressed. I hope so. The other thing is the loud music. It can get very loud in our area of Sycamore Street when they have music events in the park. But these are in the daytime and they are usually conducted by a specific organization to benefit the entire community and not going on into the night for a profit business. These are some of my concerns. I was very pleased to learn at this meeting that the Planning Department had done a good job of anticipating the possible problems that could be created by this business operating in our neighborhood and they came up with what seemed to be a reasonable list of suggestions and guidelines that this business would have to operate by. Your Planning Commission studied these rules and they also gave both sides of the issue ample time to talk to them and they debated. And then they came forwarded to you with these rules. I hope that you decided to grant this and that if you decide to grant this Special Use Permit that you do so with of the suggested items of your Planning Department and Planning Commission. Hopefully these rules will create an intolerable situation for the neighbors. Thank you all."

Kay Carwile, 250 South Sycamore Street, stated, "I have lived at this address for 56 years. I was one that totally opposed the party house across the street. I think that it is a really bad fit and a high-density long way. Other than the fire trucks it is a quiet neighborhood. The Planning Commission has done a very good job

\*Audio available upon request.

assuming that all of the suggestions are enforced. The noise issue is one that particularly concerns me. This says that they will have noise going past their property line. There is a baby in the house right behind them. One side of them there is a group home for autistic teenagers. I taught school for 34 years and I know that they do not handle noise and change very well. Old people like me are cross the street. This is the latest that I have been up since New Year's Eve and this noise going on every night before 10 o'clock is well past our bedtimes. I hope that the section number 7 would be in full force. We have not had good luck with the police department enforcing the noise ordinance when we have called them. But I hope that they would do that. And I also think that number 20 is a good point that this is good for a year and that if they don't abide by the terms then it would be put up for agreement again. Thank you very much."

Kay Freeman, 221 and 225 South Sycamore Street, stated, "I have attended and spoke at both Planning Commission meetings plus the Historic Poplar Lawn Association Meeting on this subject. My concern has been and still remains the amount of traffic and noise and parking problems that this Special Use Permit will generate. The bed and breakfast have identifiable parking spaces and that is not a problem. But once you being to factor in the events then parking noise and congestion then becomes an issue. Poplar Lawn is a small residential neighborhood and close proximity to your neighbor and limited parking in many areas. Other than South Sycamore Street the streets that would be primarily affected by this would be South Adams Street which is dead ends in central park, one-way alleys which are narrow and the extremely busy South Sycamore Street. This is a residential neighborhood where sound carries. It is not located in a downtown area where people eat, shop and party. I do not want to be subjected to the noise that these venues may possibly carry. These people should be able to go to bed early, sit in front of their TV without hearing noise from these events. Think of the noise levels that 75 people more than like with a DJ, band, drinking and eating can generate being next door to you. Why should I as a tax payer for over 25 years in this City be required to endure this for someone making a business profit. Thank you very much."

Jay Freeman, 221 South Sycamore Street, stated, "I can't really say anything more except from a standpoint of economics. We have covered noise and it is going to be bad. People are going to try and park 50 cars somewhere on Sycamore Street. Good luck. If you park it at First Baptist that is not a walk that I would want to take at 11 o'clock at night. The real estate value that you depend on for the economic growth in that area will go down. The house values will go down. Once one starts to make noises the real estate agents will begin to look at that and you will sit down and find out that your real estate value went down. Thank you."

Ray Ferguson, 2476 Poe Lane, stated, "I listened to all this and I have heard several times that this is a party house. This is not a party house. This is going to be a professional business to where it will be controlled. We have several partners on this. And it is one where we know that noise and parking is an issue. We are going to mitigate all the risk that we can and at the same time of the event. We want to make something nice for Petersburg. You can have nice weddings and a bed and breakfast as well. We are going to abide by all the City ordinances. One thing that I do not think that it is fair is something put in where we cannot have noise outside the property. If you do anything inside your house noise is going to travel outside the property. That to me is absolutely unfair and it does not make any sense to me. So, I just ask that we look at that. Parking we have that addressed. We are going to keep the decibals down at like 9:30pm. That will have people getting out the venue by 10:00pm. We are going to stay in all the ordinances that we can. I don't know if anybody noticed it but Ragland Mansion is right there and they have weddings as well. What we are asking for is to do to something similar to right up the street that has been going on for a very long. One of the things that was addressed here tonight was real estate value. There has already been a lot of money put into this mansion that was going to sit on the market longer and was going to cause some problems. In fact, the things that I noticed on one of the videos that was recently done by the City had a picture of the mansion on it. This is one of the historical mansions here in the City and we want to bring it back to its proper life and restore it. We have had a lot of good things here and we are trying to revitalize. This is what we are trying to do. We are trying to turn it into something useful. I have heard the City Manager, the Mayor and other people talking about we need to revitalize the City. That is what we are trying to do and we will respect the laws. And we will respect our

\*Audio available upon request.

neighbors and we will be good neighbors. We do not plan on coming and making this a party house. That is not what we do. If you guys do not know me, I am military also and I am pretty strick on what I do. Now is it going to be perfect? No. Are we going to make mistakes? Yes. But we are definitely going to try and correct them and fix everything that we can so that everybody here is happy at what we are doing. Thank you.”

Thaddeus Huff, Petersburg Chamber of Commerce, stated, “I just wanted to speak on behalf of Mr. Ferguson and his group. This is a man of fabulous character and I think that he stood up here. And we are taking a lot of things about his business. He is really putting a lot of time and energy in revitalizing the community. So, I ask that before you consider any kind of long-term decision that you take look at the actual facts and not the things thrown around about a party house or all of the things that have been discussed. Take a look at the facts and look at the potential investment for the area and then make your decision. Because this is a very honorable man and he is an honorable businessman and a former veteran, and his partners are the same. They want to do what is best for Petersburg through this business. Thank you.”

Seeing no further hands, Ms. Jackson closed the public hearing.

Council Member Cuthbert made a motion to approve the Special Use Permit with conditions 1-20 attached to agenda item “10f” provided that condition “8” end with the words “or similar activities.” The motion was seconded by Council Member Wilson-Smith. There was discussion among City Council Members. The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Smith-Lee, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hill, Hart and Parham

**19-ORD-20 AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE SPECIAL USE PERMIT FOR PROPERTY AT 241 SOUTH SYCAMORE STREET WITH CONDITIONS 1-20 ATTACHED TO AGENDA ITEM “10F” PROVIDED THAT CONDITION “8” END WITH THE WORDS “OR SIMILAR ACTIVITIES.”**

- g. A public hearing on proceeding with the adoption of an ordinance to authorize the sale and affirm and clarify the terms of sale of the property located at 108 E. Washington Street.

**BACKGROUND:** On March4, 2014, Council adopted Ordinance 14-ORD-14, and on February 5, 2019, council adopted Ordinance 19-ORD-14, authorizing the sale of the subject property. Neither ordinance identifies the authorized terms of sale under which the Manager may convey the property, and the most recently adopted ordinance was adopted without a public hearing. This ordinance seeks affirmation and clarification of said terms to enable the manager to proceed with the conveyance after satisfying all legal requirements.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Recommend City Council approve the ordinance authorizing execution of the purchase agreement.

Anthony Williams, City Attorney, gave a briefing of the hearing regarding 108 E. Washington Street.

Ms. Jackson opened the floor for public comments.

Jeff Fleming, 1819 Chuckatuck Avenue, stated, “We are here selling this property, again are we? I don’t know what the ordinance is because we weren’t privy to the ordinance that the City Attorney asked that you approve afterwards but I would hope that the ordinance contain some type of wording. Because I am tired of seeing this property go up for sale. I have seen it go up three times and we are stuck with it. It just keeps coming up. If we are going to sell it then sell it. We do not give people their money back. If they do not do what they are supposed to do with it then we keep the money and take the property back. We just keep dealing with

\*Audio available upon request.

this. It has got to end somewhere. We are not in the real estate business. Something needs to be put into the ordinance to that effect. That is all.”

Michael Edwards, 409 Grove Avenue, stated, “Two blocks away the same old song. It sits there and looks at us every day. Now the developer is here, the man that wants to buy it is sitting right behind me on the first row. Can we get a timeframe of when we are going to see some development on this before you all vote on this? I concur with Mr. Fleming. Enough is enough. We want to sell it and we want to get it on the tax role, but the Ramada still sits and looks and makes us sad when we look at it. It’s the saddest thing in the City. So, please before you vote I want to here from this developer what his timeline is to start work on this property. Thank you.”

Linwood Christian, 410 Mistletoe Street, stated, “If anyone knows Mary Howard will you please tell her don’t be surprised if it starts snowing in the middle of the summer. And reason why say that is because I remember when a group that she was affiliated with or she led wanted that very building. But the City saw fit to do something else and look at disarray it is in now. So, I have to say in her behalf I told you so. I am like Mr. Fleming, I’m like Mr. Edwards and even before they said it I said. Even to the tool where other council members have got mad because I did. They say that the developer is here. But please forgive us as citizens because we are tired of having this City sell property and we are going to do this, and we are going to do that. And yet we still see the same ole mess. Nothing. That is not so. Look at the Ramada Inn. Nothing. Homeless are still making a home out of the Ramada Inn. Broken windows are still in the Trailways but, yet we deserve to know what is going to be done and when. When you all put those stickers on my yard or anyone else yard when the grass is not cut you want to know when it will be cut. Or if you don’t then you don’t have a problem bringing back a fine. If these people say that they want to do something you are selling our property that the City, or somebody should get some brains enough to develop it for the better use of this City. If they can’t do what they ae supposed to do, what did Mr. Edwards and Mr. Fleming say don’t them benefit off of it. Either you piss or get off the property. Thank you.”

Seeing no further hands, Ms. Jackson closed the public hearing.

There was discussion among City Council, staff and the developer.

Council Member Hill made a motion to approve the ordinance authorizing execution of the purchase agreement. The motion was seconded by Council Member Myers. The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Smith-Lee, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Hill, Hart and Parham

**19-ORD-21 AN ORDINANCE CLARIFYING AND AFFIRMING THE TERMS OF SALE OF CITY PROPERTY LOCATED AT 108 E. WASHINGTON STREET – TRAILWAYS STATION TAX PARCEL NO.:011-34-0001.**

h. A public hearing on the utility rate.

Michael Rogers, Chief Operating Officer, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the utility rate.

Ms. Jackson opened the floor for public comments.

Ron Flock, 1708 Pender Avenue, stated, “I had this conversation with you all at the last meeting. Option 3 combines 5/8, ¾ and 1 inch altogether. It is the most fair and equitable solution to everything. How long do we want to sit in these meetings and dedicate a half an hour to residents coming in complaining about a one inch when we can get this over with and get this behind us? Please let’s just get this behind us. Option 3 takes that into account. It is just not fair to many people. Thank you.”

\*Audio available upon request.

Sara Melissa Witiak, 22 Centre Hill Court, stated, "I have a one-inch meter. I have tried to get a response back. The gentleman who just presented regarding the affordability for one-inch meters according to EPA standards. I sent him my calculations using the number published from the water study. Those calculations to the best of my knowledge show that if we do the 12 – 12 plan that is up here by the year 2023 5/8-inch folks will be paying a water bill for a regular customer of \$64.70. Well that may sound high for a 5/8-inch meter. That is less than one-inch meter folks currently paying now. One-inch meter folks are paying \$74.00 now. In 2023 a one-inch meter customer will be paying \$108.85 a month for something that is essential to life. That will mean 2,000 in Petersburg in terms of residential customers in paying taxes of 30% of capacity fees which I understand the difference of capacity fees and commodity fees. I really encourage you how you can distribute this fairly because right now I am not eating out at restaurants because my water bill. That increase in water bills represents the two meals eating out. Multiply that by 2,000 other residents of paying the one-inch fees. That is a lot of meals and a big drain on our economy. What we are asking people with 5/8-inch meters to pay a little bit more. A cost of a cup of coffee is not the cost of two meals every month to make this fair and equitable. We need EPA standards due to the 12-12 plan and the EPA special will be crossed with one-inch folks? Thank you."

Michael Packer, 1245 Woodland Road, stated, "I speak in opposition to the proposed rate increase. And others have asked me to speak on their behalf of those people that have come tonight. Mr. Rogers explained at the town hall meetings that administration was not making a recommendation to increase the rates as recommended by the consultants who conducted the rate study, but that the inconclusion of the increase of the budget was just a placeholder until a recommendation could be made. I expect now tonight that you have heard the recommendation of the administration. Now the increases have been advertised without any relief of the one-inch meter for all customers. Now an additional public hearing would be necessary if any of the capacity alternatives are going to be considered as they all have additional increases for some customers and these alternatives were not advertised. And an additional public hearing may be advisable considering this is the last advertisement for this public hearing which places a day late. I see on the agenda already that you scheduled a public hearing and I would hope that the advertisement would be broader enough to allow council to consider some of the other alternatives. The consultants support their recommendation referencing the American waterworks Association Manual of Water Practices M1. For sure ARWA recognizes the practice of having a 6c that increases with water meter size. ARWA says, 'Your argument is made that utilities invest in facilities to provide capacity and that these costs must be recovered regardless of the amount of water used during a given period. This is sometime referred to as a readiness to serve charge.' On their chart, the chart from ARWA, of an example of six charges by meter size, they show a 5/8-meter water charge of \$13.41, 3/4 inch meter size for \$14.11 and a one-inch meter size of \$16.24. This represents a 5% to 9% increase respectively between each of those meter sizes. Petersburg's increase from a 5/8 meter or the 3/4 meter to a one-inch meter under the proposed ordinance you have before you is 60%. The manual goes on to say, 'the requirement to recover cost without regards to the lien of sale is real but it does not necessary suggest that the six charges should represent a large portion of the requirement.' In other words, yes, you can have six charges and vary based upon the size of the meter but most of the cost that customers pay comes from how much water they use and how much sewer they use. The quote goes on 'a continued charge on volume metric charges', that's consumption, 'has value from an equity perspective.' Now this is the book that your consultants told you and your administration, and the citizens was the book that they used to justify these great differences in the meter capacity charges. The extent of which strategies with large services employ is frequently limited as the result of concern of affordability for small customers. The book says do not do this to small customers. The six capacity for my last bill which is 81% the total charge for the water and sewer that I have used. That is not a small part that is a large part. Only 19% of my bill was based upon my water and sewer that I use. So, the consultants own supporting documentation fully shows that Petersburg very high fix for water capacity fees are inequitable contrary to industry standards. It makes me sad that the City Council has to decide if the professional consultants are correct when they recommend that the City continue with this size meter fixed capacity charge or if the citizens are correct when they explain a minority group of about 2,000 customers are being required to bare and unfair burden to balance the utility budget. We will shortly see if the

\*Audio available upon request.

council will fix this inequity or will protect the majority. If City Council collects from every customer and if the City Council would collect penalty and interest of those who are late and if the City administration would place liens on the property for unpaid accounts. If the City would substantially reduce the inflow and infiltration of rain water to the sewer system and if the City would correctly read all meters this problem would be fixed with no customers. If this is not going to happen at the least the City could anticipate using some of the surplus in the utility fund for the next few years to give relief to the one-inch water meter customers. Thank you.”

Barb Rudolph, 1675 Mt. Vernon Street, stated, “Let me see if my thing will work on here. I am going to give you something to enjoy. I want it to work. I am going to try and not repeat anything anybody else said. My perspective is that I think there are a lot of variables that are affecting rate setting. We already heard a lot about the continued disparity between the 5/8 and one-inch meters and how that effects 2,000 residential customers. Some of this information came to two of the public forums. There were a lot of people that came out and talked about public issues and lot of people from the City was there and confirmed that these were the issues. And that included things like lots of customers are still not being counted and they are not being charged. And this includes some commercial customers. So, there are some unrealized revenue out there, but the City doesn't even know what that is. Right now, these customers are getting water and sewer services and they are just not being charged. There is also discussion of apartment customers. They are being charged but they are paying at a lower rate. There is not really assuming to be a rationale for that. As you all know the continued concerns and issues are billing and collections. And that introduces a lot of variability and the way customers are treated. I mean you hear about customers who payments are not being credited and other people who are not being charged at all. And so, I am not trying to bash anyone here I am just trying to point out that this is a continuing and yet to be solved problem. There also hasn't been any enforcement for the past several years. I think Mr. Packer touched on that. But when you look at these revenue projections and we talk about these collection rate whether its 80% or 90% you really are not talking about the whole issue of delinquent payments and the settling of paying that is a separate issue. That is another piece of this. And then finally for the capital plans for the South Central Wastewater Authority, I still read that and read what they have in their materials as being prospective rather than certain about what they are going to do in the out years like 2022 and 2023. So, all of that is to say that the numbers that have been used to do all this rate study projections and lovely charge that you have seen, there are so many missing pieces of suspect accuracy that I think that this is not to say that we don't need to have rates but I would say lets slow down and lets look at perhaps giving ourselves a provisional fix for 2020. And then continue to look at this in the out years. So, I have a couple concrete suggestions that would actually revise the charge schedule to reduce or eliminate that disparity of equity between the 5/8-inch meter and the one-inch meter. So, in other words aim for having the residential customers to all pay at the same rate. Another thing, one of the assumptions that one of the consultants used is rate smoothing. That you would smooth and have the same rate increase for three years that were studied and that was 12.2%. I suggest because again there are so many unknowns and so many yet revenue that is not realize, is that I would ask that the administration of consultants would figure out what is the actual amount required to run the operations in 2020. That would leave out a lot of these capital improvements that are going on with the regional authorities because those are not coming up in the first year. So, that is in essence I think if you could bring back something to the next meeting a public hearing and look at a provisional way of doing this rather than saying that we have to fix all of this now with unanswered questions. Thank you.”

John Rooney, 727 Taylor Street, stated, “Thank you for the opportunity to share briefly. Just like to make a few points. I think sometimes we get caught in some systems of thought. It is very difficult to think outside our box. But believe in going outside the box to which we are contained. I will give you an example I was a financial planner and investment advisor for 18 years. And I studied a lot of companies and their operations and ups and downs. One thing I realized is that when the company operations dropped they responded to that. They didn't respond by raising prices. They responded by cutting cost. And they did somethings that made people very uncomfortable. They had to fire people. Sometimes they had to take away things that people didn't like. But they had to do that to survive. And we think about beautiful Petersburg. Petersburg is not a rich City. Why should we have the same quality of water as a rich City. When really there

\*Audio available upon request.

are so many poor people. There are people that can't even pay \$60 or \$65 a month. And now we are going to eventually raise it to \$75 or \$80. The delinquency rate is going to increase. The consultant probably didn't include that in its figures. See one problem with the consultant's report is that we pay \$50,000 for the report and they are generally designed to come up with a pre-report goal. And the goal is how do we raise taxes to raise money. See it is unbiased. I think that we need to have a biased approach to this. And see some of you folks can be hero's by solving some of these problems. This is the opportunity for you to be a hero. But start thinking of outside the box. How can we actually cut cost? No, we can't cut cost. Yes, we can. I guarantee you we can cut cost. I believe there is a way we can do it. I believe that there are other solutions. I think there needs to be solution very quickly. I have got a 5/8 meter and I heard about the difference in cost. I thought it wasn't true. I think the average person that hears about will come to some conclusion that the City tried to pull a fast one on bunch of people and it was arbitral. So be a hero and change and fix it please. Thank you."

Seeing no further hands, Ms. Jackson closed the public hearing.

There was discussion among City council, staff and Mr. Packer.

Council Member Myers made a motion to direct staff to proceed with the presentation of an ordinance authorizing the adoption of staff recommendation. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Hart.

Council Member Cuthbert made a substitute motion that they direct staff to develop an Option 4 based on the authority that Mr. Packer brought to attention incorporating a capacity charge differential consistent with the authority that Mr. Packer has brought to attention and bring Option 4 to council for consideration as soon as the staff can feasibly come up with Option 4. The motion was seconded by Council Member Wilson-Smith. There was discussion on the motion. The motion was not approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith and Hill; Voting No: Smith-Lee, Myers, Hart and Parham

Original motion made by Council Member Myers goes back on the floor.

Council Member Myers made a motion to direct staff to proceed with the presentation of an ordinance authorizing the adoption of staff recommendation. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Hart. The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Smith-Lee, Hart, Hill, Myers and Parham; Voting No: Cuthbert and Wilson-Smith

i. A public hearing on the proposed FY19-20 Operating Budget.

**BACKGROUND:** The City Manager has recommended an operating spending plan of \$106,315,419 for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2020.

**RECOMMENDATION:** To receive public comments on the proposed FY2019-2020 Operating Budget.

Treyvion Hall, 15 Flower Circle, stated, "And I want to talk about you all raising the schools funding. Because our education is very important to us and we want you to raise the funding so that we can hire better teachers and fix things that are wrong with our facility and take more advanced placement courses. As of right now if you were to walk through Petersburg High School or Vernon Johns gymnasium or Westview on a rainy day you would see buckets of trashcans filled up with water because there are leaks throughout the school. Another problem in our school is that there are a lot of students who come and tell me that they have long term subs. Meaning that the teachers that are teaching them are not really certified to be teaching them and they are just subs who are supposed to be subs but their real teacher never came back. And this is a really big issue because most of the students come to me and say, 'I do not really need to go to school because there is no point and I am not learning anything, so when I take the SOL I am just going to fail it. So, I might as well not

\*Audio available upon request.

come to school.' Which raises a bigger problem, which is delinquency. I also hear a lot about how students feel like they can't come and speak. So, this is why I am here speaking about the things that they come to me about. I may not be a SVA Leader or the President of my school but I don't mind speaking. Unfortunately, our school is receiving less funding than other schools in our area. So, the teachers really not competitive in Petersburg. Our funding really does not help the situation. And I am going to be attending Virginia State University in the fall and I would love to help my City and I hope that you all will also help our City by doing this. Not for only me but for the students after me. Thank you."

Jeffrey Fleming, 1819 Chuckatuck Avenue, stated, "I want to thank the City Manager and staff. They put on a great a meeting on Saturday. We had a nice rain Saturday and we learned about the budget. I learned a lot about the budget. I am here to talk about the budget. Your most valuable asset is your employees. You can have all the trucks, cars and nicest buildings. But if you do not have good employees you have nothing. A good employee is a happy employee. Would you agree? Right now, the employees are not happy. This council promised that they would never take 10% from us again. Am I correct? But I learned Saturday that the health insurance for family and dual is going up. And it is going to take a hit on some of people that work, your employees. It is going to be more than that 10%. I do not have any letters behind my name but I do have a 'PHD.' A 'public high school diploma.' Those are the letters that I have behind my name. I am not a rocket scientist. But I learned at the meeting Saturday that Chief Miller went in and saved eight positions and put on the shelf until next year and was able to save some money. My question is why it was not put out to the whole City. Why did it stay in his department and then the City Manager directs other department heads to do the same in order to cover the health insurance rates? That is just me. Tell me if I am wrong. But we have got to find the money because we are going to lose some people. And we are going to lose a lot. My mother always taught me that when you leave somewhere leave it better than you found it. Always! Well, I got two more years here. May be three or four more years and I am going to be leaving. I am going to retire. It is going to be pretty hard because I have to reach way down because there is no skills and abilities. Because we had young people. All the guys that have the experience are leaving because they cannot afford to work here. You are penalizing the guys with families. Families will make people stable. That is what make people stay. The single guys come and go. They want to party, drink and run around old town. It's the guys with kids and families. Those are the ones that you are penalizing. I employed you council to please have the city manager and her team to go in and find it somewhere to find the money to cover this health insurance cost. We were promised last year that they would shop around. We were promised this. I did not see it shopped around. Now I am here begging you. If not, it is overtime and we saw that that did not work. Then what you are going to close a station. You know that is not going to work. Who is going to sub a closed station, police officers? No, no police officers because then these people are going to suffer. Okay, we have got to find a solution. That is all, thank you."

Jacquelyn Bailey Kidd, 509 St. Luke Street, stated, "I am here tonight to request full funding for the FY20 Petersburg Public Schools Budget. But first I want to say to the council, I quietly applaud the council for the selection and hiring of all the new city executives. Especially, the City Manager and the City Chief of Police. I further applaud some of the goals that they have achieved over the past two years. But tonight I am asking you, the council and city manager to reexamine and reconsider the following budget decisions. The schools board asked you for a little over \$11 million dollars for its FY20 budget. That \$11 million dollars translates to about 2,600 per child as Petersburg share for its 4,200 children in the system. But your FY20 budget for our 4,200 children is a flat \$10 million. Which translates to about 13% of your budget or \$2,400 per child. But this is where I hit the pause button. You are about a pay an increase of \$3 more per day to Riverside Regional jail that carries an average daily population of 274 inmates from Petersburg. Currently, you are paying \$40 per day or \$14,600 per year and per inmate. It is going to increase to \$43 per day or \$15,365 per year and per inmate. Therefore, I am asking that you reconsider full funding for the Petersburg Public Schools and use that difference as a down payment which can be viewed as the reduction of the future need to increase funding for or regional jail. Thank you so much."

\*Audio available upon request.

Coach William Lawson, III, Athletic Director at Petersburg High School, stated, "Thank you for this opportunity. I usually do not get involved in public matters but this time I thought that it was important for me to speak. My family has been involved in the school system in Petersburg since 1955. There has always been a Lawson in the school system since 1955. My grandmother was an English teacher at Blandford, my mother worked at Petersburg High School and Peabody and my father was at Petersburg High School as a basketball coach and biology teacher. We care for kids in Petersburg. As time goes on I see the decline in our students. It is because we are not putting our kids first. We are not supporting the schools and when it comes to activities for youth they are not thought about. The things that go first are for the kids. I can be here all night to talk about the things that we need in our system. It would be great if the division in Petersburg includes the kids in our communities. They are the ones that will be here in 20 to 30 years from now. The majority of people of Petersburg used to live here when the City was the best City in Virginia. Families are moving because we don't have businesses that are for the youth. Even with the recreation department. Whenever the budget is cut they are the first ones that have their budget cut. Again, this involves our youth. We cannot perish without helping our youth work. I see the end results at the high school. All I ask is that you visualize the way Petersburg used to be at one time. And we still have a chance to come back and be great again, but we have to invest in our kids. Thank you."

Dr. Ann stated, "Good evening Mayor Parham and City Council. I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this evening. I do appreciate the difficult situation that you are in with scarce dollars and that you need to make difficult choices. But I would like to share from my own experience how important education is and why I believe that the budget needs to be increased for our school system for next year. Education is everything. My parents came to this country with nothing. We lost everything in the war and we came to America essentially penniless. However, my parents have their education and they used that education to rebuild their lives and make better opportunities for their children. My parents made sure that we had access to the best education by living in communities that had strong schools. They made it possible for me to attend some of the best public schools in California and I went one to earn advanced degrees in some of the best universities in the country. I have a master's degree in education from UCLA, Pepperdine and Harvard University. I have a Doctorate Degree in education from Harvard university and an MBA from MIT. But one does not need an advanced degree to understand that investment in education is a critical driver of economic development and security of our City. I moved to Petersburg by choice. I live in a multigenerational home in Walnut Hill with my mother and my daughter and we are extremely happy here. Petersburg is a beautiful place to live. We are surrounded by fabulous neighbors; gorgeous historic homes and we belong to a church in the community. Most importantly I have a daughter. She will start kindergarten in Walnut Hill in a year and a half. I want my daughter to have the same quality of education that I did. And I want her to have it right here in Petersburg. I do not want to leave our beautiful home and community. And I don't want to leave because our schools are so poorly supported. The short-term strategies for dealing with fiscal emergencies and long-term strategies for developing a property tax base must include education. We need to focus on making the investments in schools as strong as they can be so that we attract the tax base in Petersburg that we need. And I am not talking about tens and thousands of dollars I am not talking about the salaries of a few administrators I am talking about tens of millions of dollars that are needed to upgrade, revitalize and restore our schools so that the infrastructure is not crumbling beneath our children's feet. If you can figure out how to increase the investment in our schools to help our facilities the tax dollars will come. I can't tell you how many people that I have spoken to about what an amazing place this is to live, and they say yeah but the schools are falling apart. The investment in the schools is not enough. What more can you do to invest in our City because if you build it the tax dollars will come. Thank you."

Vice Mayor Hart made a motion suspend the Rules of Council for another few moments to finish this portion of the agenda so that the children at the meeting can speak.

Mr. Williams stated, "In accordance with Section 7, that would include the remaining items on the agenda would be involved. The reason that I stated that is the Rule 7."

\*Audio available upon request.

Council Member Cuthbert asked, "Isn't Rule 7 a rule of council. So, couldn't we suspend that as well?"

Mr. Williams stated, "Yes, you can suspend the entire Rules of Council."

Council Member Cuthbert stated, "I am not interested in staying here until 2:00am and I do not think anyone else on council is either. I think that Vice mayor Hart had a good thought. Let's suspend the rules that is necessary so that we can complete this particular item. And I would hope after that we can go home."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "According to what Mr. Cuthbert said, suspend the Rules of Council up to what is necessary, but we have unfinished business with the Preservation Taskforce MOU that we stipulated that we would address at this meeting so that they can get their ducks in a row. So, we would have to include that."

Mayor Parham stated, "Right. Council Member Wilson-Smith the Preservation Taskforce wanted to delay it since they are not here tonight. They wanted us to table action until the next meeting."

Council Member Myers stated, "It is past midnight we cannot extend. You have to do it before 12:00am."

Mayor Parham stated, "It is 12:01am and the meeting is adjourned."

**\*\*Meeting adjourned at 12:01am, therefore items "11-20" was not heard, discussed or commented on.**

**11. PUBLIC INFORMATION PERIOD:** The Public Information Period is established by the Rules of Council to hear input from City residents or owners of businesses in the City. It will last for a maximum of 30 minutes. Speakers will be called in the order that they have signed up to speak. If there are ten or fewer speakers, each shall speak for a maximum of 3 minutes. If there are more than ten (10) people desiring to speak, the time allotted to each person may be adjusted or the number of speakers limited to meet the time limitation. A speaker may speak on items **except those that are listed on tonight's Council agenda**. Any matter brought before the attention of the City Council during the public information period will not be acted upon by the City Council at this meeting.

No items for this portion of the agenda.

**12. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FOR/FROM THE MAYOR OR COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

No items for this portion of the agenda.

**13. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA:**

No items for this portion of the agenda.

**14. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

- a. Consideration to extend the timeframe of the Petersburg Preservation Task Force memorandum of Understanding.
- b. Proposed amendments to the Rules of Council

**15. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

\*Audio available upon request.

No items for this portion of the agenda.

**16. NEW BUSINESS:**

No items for this portion of the agenda.

**17. REPORTS/REPONSES TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC INFORMATION PERIOD:**

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

**18. CITY MANAGER'S AGENDA**

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

**19. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM CLERK:**

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

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

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

**21. ADJOURNMENT:**

City Council adjourned at 12:01 a.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of City Council

APPROVED:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor