

The work session meeting of the Petersburg City Council was held on Tuesday, June 7, 2022, at the Petersburg Public Library. Mayor Parham called the meeting to order at 5:43 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL:

Present:

Council Member Charles H. Cuthbert, Jr.
Council Member Treska Wilson-Smith
Council Member W. Howard Myers
Vice Mayor Annette Smith-Lee
Mayor Samuel Parham

Absent: Council Member Arnold Westbrook, Jr.
Council Member Darrin Hil

Present from City Council Administration:

Clerk of City Council Nykesha D. Jackson
Interim City Manager Kenneth Miller
City Attorney Anthony C. Williams

2. PRAYER:

Mayor Parham stated, "Vice Mayor Smith-Lee will lead us in our opening prayer."

Vice Mayor Smith-Lee 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 Hill and Westbrook are absent.

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

a. Minutes:

-May 17, 2022 – Closed Session Meeting
-May 23, 2022 – Closed Session City Council Meeting
-May 24, 2022 – Special City Council Meeting

b. A request to schedule a public hearing on June 21, 2022, for the consideration of an ordinance authorizing the City Manager to execute a purchase agreement between the City of Petersburg and William Nicholson towards the sale of City-owned property at 302 Market Street North, parcel ID 010-21001.

c. A request to schedule a public hearing on an appeal by Taiwo Onadipe, applicant and owner of 215 Henry Street, Tax Parcel 011-20-0010, on the decision of the Architectural Review Board (ARB). The property is located within the Centre Hill Local Historic District.

d. A request to hold a public hearing on June 21, 2022, for the consideration of an ordinance authorizing the City Manager to execute a purchase agreement between the City of Petersburg

*Audio available upon request.

and Ruffin Enterprises, LLC towards the sale of City-owned property at 1544 Halifax St, parcel 052-030005.

- e. Consideration of an ordinance authorizing the Interim City Manager to execute the Commercial Lease Agreement between Marwaha Real Estate, LLC. And the City of Petersburg for the property located at 30 Franklin Street, Petersburg, VA – 1st Reading.
- f. A request to schedule a public hearing for consideration of an ordinance to authorize the execution of a Deed of Easement to Dinwiddie County for Ferndale Park.

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

6. SPECIAL REPORTS:

- a. Presentation of a Proclamation proclaiming June 15, 2022, as “World Elder Abuse Awareness Day”.

Mayor Parham read the proclamation aloud and presented it to Yvette Workman, Executive Administrative Assistant at Crater District Area Agency on Aging.

- b. Presentation on Richard Bland College and the Petersburg Sports Complex.

Marquis Allen, Director of Parks and Recreation, gave a PowerPoint presentation on Richard Bland College and the Petersburg Sports Complex.

Key points:

- Brand new field will increase sports tourism for tournaments.
- The brand-new field will be for Petersburg High School Junior Varsity and Varsity Baseball Program. The middle school program will be on the brand-new field as well.
- Hosting 12 doubleheaders at Petersburg Sports Complex as Richard Bland College being the host site for games.
- Partnership for RBC to offer camps, and usage of facilities for programming and special events.
- Richard Bland Approved Donation is for \$110,000 to reconstruct baseball field for games and practices.
- City of Petersburg contribution is approximately \$65,000 for complex improvements.
- Richard Bland College will establish a feeder program with the high school, host regional events for baseball and softball at the complex, 7-year agreement with potential funding opportunities to enhance the complex and develop a marketing plan to brand the program with community support in the tri-city area.
- The City of Petersburg is drafting legal MOU. The MOU has been sent to the Richard Bland College legal team.
- The bid proposal will be sent to the procurement office. The start construction with a projected timeline of completion Fall 2022.
- Golf Course led by Mr. Fagan will support the needs of field cultivation, field maintenance, treatment schedule and PT support through current budget request.
- Establish a plan with Department of Public Works for improvements that can be made internally with a routine maintenance plan.

*Audio available upon request.

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "I do not have any questions. Thank you very much."

Mayor Parham stated, "Great work Mr. Allen."

Mr. Allen stated, "I just want to thank you all and thank Mr. Miller and Mrs. Innis for helping to guide me through this and for council support. Thank you."

Mayor Parham stated, "Thank you."

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:

a. An update on Capital Projects in the City of Petersburg.

Randall Williams, Interim Director of Public Works and Utilities, gave an update on the capital projects.

Key points:

- Park N Ride – Project team is working to set up walk through to go through the punch list items with contractor. The next steps involve security installations & inspections. The expected completion is late summer/early fall 2022.
- Southside Depot – Pre bid conference took place on May 16, 2022. The receipt and opening bid date is June 9, 2022.
- Farmer Street Pool – Construction started on June 6, 2021. The patch delaminating Marcite to boost strength and water resistance, replace missing and broken tiles & regROUT; remove, furnish, and install new sets of steps. The expected completion is mid-late June 2022.
- St. Andrew Street Bridge Replacement – Currently the contractor is working to remedy inspection items. The surveyor was on site May 26, 2022, to take 3D photos under the bridge to get measurements for bearing pad shims needed for jacking & blocking plan by engineers. There is a two-month lead on bearing pad shims. It is expected to open August 2022.
- LED Replacement Project (Dominion) – Pocahontas Island is complete.
- Annual Paving Contract – Recently paved Atlantic Street from West Washington Street to Farmer Street. Paving North Park Drive from Forest Hill Road to East Park Drive before the end of this FY.
- Poor Creek Wastewater Improvements & Water System Improvements – Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) approved in state budget - \$29.6 million. Grant application submitted to US Economic Development Administration (EDA). Bid documents are next.

Mr. Williams stated, "We have had five stop sign intersections completed. They are at Custer Street and Hamilton Street, Custer Street and Hawk Street, Liberty Street and Harrison Street, Claremont Street and Blair Street, St. Andrew, and Webster Street. Next week schedule is Patterson Street and Augusta Street, Ferndale Avenue and Bay Yard, Ferndale Avenue and Elm Street."

Mayor Parham stated, "Thank you Mr. Williams for all your hard work with that."

*Audio available upon request.

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "The annual paving, I am not understanding. I had requested sidewalk paving down 36, because people walk back and forth near the trussell and all the way down. And it has been years and it still is not done. But we jump over and do other paving. I am not understanding that. I know that you were not here, but I know what has transpired and it is actually nothing. I also know that I had requested it and I believe that a study was done to get that done. So, if you can follow through and find that somewhere. The other thing is in relation to the stop signs, did anyone run any of this by the fire department. Is the fire department aware of the new stop signs that are going up?"

Mr. Williams stated, "I am not sure if they are or not."

Mr. Miller stated, "In March, I forget the exact date, Chief Travis Christian sent an email out requesting information from public works and fire with respect to the stop signs."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "But did fire respond?"

Mr. Miller stated, "I would have to check with Chief Christian on that one."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "Thank you. I am only asking the question about the fire department because I know that it is a matter of fire department rules that when you put up new stop signs or any traffic pattern that the fire department has to be involved in the process. They are the ones that have to know the layout to get to where they need to go. That is why I am asking. Thank you."

Mr. Williams stated, "I have a schedule right here and I will make sure to get that to the fire chief tonight."

10. UTILITIES:

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

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. Miller stated, "We were fortunate enough, Mrs. Innis and I, to attend the Blandford School as well as the high school to move forward with respect to our interns for the summer. I do want to recognize one man tonight, Mr. Graves. Can you stand up for a second? This young man will be one of our interns. He is a triple major in political science and other things. This is his second year at college. He will be working with us this summer. I had a golden opportunity of chatting with him today. So, I wanted to bring him before council just to see the types of young folks who will be working with us and who will be future leaders in our city. I will ask

*Audio available upon request.

Chief Christian to give council just an update with respect to what is happening to the shots fired money at the Attorney General's Office gave us with respect to curbing gun violence."

Chief Christian stated, "Good evening. With regards to the \$300,000 given to us by the Attorney General's Office, with regards to gun violence. At this point we have not spent any of the money. We are vetting different programs that are being presented to us with a focus being on our PAL (Police Athletic League) Program, which is going to be put in place by our police department. As you can imagine, we have had several programs that have been presented to us and we continue to get them on a daily basis. So, we are vetting each one of the programs. We have been looking at some of our local residents and individuals that have programs already established. We are partnered with Mount Olivet Baptist Church to kind of assist us with some of the athletic pieces. He has a gym facility that will be available for us to use. We are also utilizing or partnering with Another Level Barber & Beauty School. With that it is owned by Mr. Wesley Nichols who is a long-time resident here in the City of Petersburg. He has served as a mentor; entrepreneur and he also provide the educational piece that is beneficial to our students and young adults here in the city. So, at this point we have not utilized any of the funds, but we plan to do so in the near future. But we want to make sure that we adhere to council's request in terms of presenting it to you before we spend anything as well as being in compliance with the Attorney General's request as well. Any questions?"

Mayor Parham stated, "Thank you Chief for that update."

15. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM THE CLERK:

*No items for this portion of the agenda.

16. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM THE CITY ATTORNEY:

*No items for this portion of the agenda.

17. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Gilvia Stith, 2448 County Drive, stated, "I have a couple of things that I am interested in speaking about. One of the things is that I have had the opportunity to go out and speak with the homeless. I am always talking about the homeless. But I do not know if you all are aware that people are coming from other areas because they feel like Petersburg is an easy target. And I am going to continue to do the baggies and I am going to continue to pass out the dollars. But I am just wondering what we can do to prevent this. Are they welcome or are they not welcome? I do not know how to address this situation. I do not know if the mayor is aware that a lot of the people who are homeless have payees. These people have incomes, and they are on social security, and they are homeless veterans. They have mental health issues as I have said before, so why aren't the payees held liable for when these people are out on the street. If they have payees and they have income, shouldn't they have proper housing. And some of them have mental issues to the degree that they are not even aware. They think that the payees are supposed to take their entire check and do whatever they want with it. To me that is just not fair. That is one of my biggest concerns about the homeless. I just wanted to ask a question about Peabody. I know that you all said in another meeting that Peabody is going to be sold. Maybe I misunderstood. On that note, I am just wondering if Petersburg High is a high school and this is where they are going for an academic perspective, why cannot Peabody be restructured and opened as a vocational school where we can add these skills and learning tools back into the schools. So, that when the kids do graduate that they do have some type of skill that they can use going into the workforce and college. That is what I had on my mind."

Barbara Rudolph, 1675 Mt. Vernon, stated, "My theme tonight is disclosure. My interest is in the audit or the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). Now in past years you all have expressed a lot of

*Audio available upon request.

interest in where those audits were in terms of being completed and being submitted to the state on time. Which the audit from last year was due to the state on November 30th, 2021. We are over six months past that. There has been no public announcement of the status of the audit and no public posting of the status of the audit. That is out of compliance with state law. I know some of you in the past years of asked about it. If you remember, we had Patrice Elliot when she was the finance director got up and she presented about it. Mrs. Ferrell-Benavides was the City Manager, and she had the auditors give status reports even though the audit was late. The public was getting reports on where it was going. To my knowledge we have not seen anything and that is really different and strange, and I would hope that you all would have a concern about it because I certainly do. It throws in the question of how we do a budget, and we don't know where we stand. Another one is a repeat. When you present information in these meetings that is not in the agenda packets, that should be published and provided to the public. That is in accordance with the FOIA Code. I will cite it 2.2-3707. I brought it up here before and I brought it up to the public information officer on several occasions and I am bringing it up again. Again, with the previous administration of Mrs. Ferrell-Benavides it was generally being posted. The fire department, readiness, and finances. I do not need to say more. You all are following the news. I think citizens really want to know what is going on. Well, I know we do. We are concerned. Lastly, the Ramada Inn, I gathered from your vote at the end of closed session, by the reference to the court case. I know the court case you referenced is the Ramada Inn case. And you said something about a closing. I do not know if that means that you are buying the property back from Mr. Harrison but considering his significantly legal problems, I hope that you are being real careful if you are giving money to him so that he can bail himself out of his problems in Richmond with the model tobacco complex. Thank you.”

18. ADJOURNMENT:

City Council adjourned at 6:11 p.m.

Clerk of City Council

APPROVED:

Mayor

*Audio available upon request.