



# COUNCIL

## Communicates

### Highlights from City Council Meetings

**September 17, 2024**

Petersburg Public Library

#### City Council Members

Ward 1

**Marlow Jones**

[mjones@petersburg-va.org](mailto:mjones@petersburg-va.org)

Ward 2

**Darrin Hill**

**Vice Mayor**

[dhill@petersburg-va.org](mailto:dhill@petersburg-va.org)

Ward 3

**Samuel Parham**

**Mayor**

[sparham@petersburg-va.org](mailto:sparham@petersburg-va.org)

Ward 4

**Charles Cuthbert**

[ccuthbert@petersburg-va.org](mailto:ccuthbert@petersburg-va.org)

Ward 5

**W. Howard Myers**

[whowardmyers@petersburg-va.org](mailto:whowardmyers@petersburg-va.org)

Ward 6

**Anette Smith-Lee**

[ailee@petersburg-va.org](mailto:ailee@petersburg-va.org)

Ward 7

**Arnold Westbrook**

[awestbrook@petersburg-va.org](mailto:awestbrook@petersburg-va.org)

#### Please Note:

These are not the official minutes of the City Council meeting.

The official minutes and agendas can be accessed on the city website:

[www.petersburg-va.org](http://www.petersburg-va.org)

Please note that the official minutes are not posted until approved by City Council.

#### Closed Session

3:00 pm

1. Roll Call  
**Councilman Jones was absent on rollcall. All other Councilmembers were present.**
2. Closed Session  
The purpose of this meeting is to convene in the closed session pursuant to:
  - a. §2.2-3711(A)(7) and (8) of the Code of Virginia for the Purpose of Receiving Legal Advice and Status Update from the City Attorney and Legal Consultation Regarding the Subject of Actual or Probable Litigation and Specific Legal Matters Requiring the Provision of Legal Advice by the City Attorney, Specifically Including but Not Limited to Discussion Regarding SCC Rep. #24- 0491; the requirements of §56-265.17 of the Code of Virginia; §28.2-1308 of the Code of Virginia; §15.2-505 of the Code of Virginia; 24.2-101 of the Code of Virginia; and 2-2.1 of the Petersburg City Charter; and
  - b. §2.2-3711(A)(1) of the Code of Virginia for the Purpose of Discussion Pertaining to Performance, Assignment, and Appointment of Specific Public Employees of the City of Petersburg, Specifically Including but not Limited to Discussion of Performance, Assignment, and Appointment of a Specific Public Officer of the City of Petersburg; and
  - c. §2.2-3711(A)(3) of the Code of Virginia for the Purpose of Discussion or Consideration of the Acquisition of Real Property for a Public Purpose and the Disposition of Publicly Held Real Property Where Discussion in an Open Meeting Would Adversely Affect the Bargaining Position or Negotiating Strategy of the Public Body, Specifically

Including but not Limited to the Acquisition and Disposition of Real Property; and  
d. §2.2-3711(A)(29) of the Code of Virginia for the Purpose of Discussion of the Award of a Public Contract Involving the Expenditure of Public Funds, Including Interviews of Bidders or Offerors, and Discussion of the Terms or Scope of Such Contract, Where Discussion in an Open Session Would Adversely Affect the Bargaining Position or Negotiating Strategy of the Public Body; and  
e. §2.2-3711(A)28 of the Code of Virginia for the Purpose of Discussion of Information Subject to the Exclusion in Subdivision 11 of §2.2-3705.6 by a Responsible Public Entity or an Affected Locality or Public Entity, as Those Terms are Defined in §33.2-1800, or Any Independent Review Panel Appointed to Review Information and Advise the Responsible Public Entity Concerning Such Records.

A motion was approved to add acceptance of the IRF grant for a development project associated with Sycamore Grove to the agenda.

A motion was approved to accept the IRF grant and proceed with the draft development agreement on Sycamore Grove.

A motion was approved to add to the agenda the acceptance of a new site for the Petersburg Animal Shelter.

A motion was approved to accept the resolution approving a new site on Flank Road for the Petersburg Animal Shelter.

### 3. Adjournment

#### **Regular Council Meeting**

5:00 pm

1. Roll Call  
All present.
2. Prayer  
Led by Vice Mayor Hill.
3. Pledge of Allegiance  
Led by Mayor Parham.
4. Determination of the Presence of a Quorum  
Quorum present.

5. Proclamations/Recognitions/Presentation of Ceremonial Proclamations
  - a. Prostate Cancer Awareness Month Proclamation
  
6. Presentations
  - a. Davenport Presentation - New Courthouse Plan of Finance  
Representatives from Davenport gave an overview of the City's financial status and future financing for capital projects, including a new courthouse complex, police station, animal shelter, and school.
  
7. Responses to Previous Public Information Posted  
Council Communicates.
  
8. Approval of Consent Agenda (to include minutes of previous meetings):
  - a. Minutes of Previous Meetings:
    - July 2, 2024 City Council Work Session
    - July 15, 2024 City Council Special MeetingApproved.
  
9. Official Public Hearings
  - a. A Public Hearing for Consideration of the Carryover of Funds From FY24 for Approved Projects to FY25  
Approved.
  
  - b. A Public Hearing for Consideration of Acceptance & Appropriation of the FY25 Victim Witness Grant  
Approved.
  
  - c. A Public Hearing for Consideration of Acceptance & Appropriation of the FY25 Witness Protection Grant  
Approved.
  
  - d. A Public Hearing for Consideration of Acceptance & Appropriation of the FY25 Community Corrections & Pretrial Services Grant  
Approved.
  
  - e. A Public Hearing for Consideration of Acceptance & Appropriation of Funding from Virginia Department of Fire Programs - Aid to Localities (ATL) for FY25  
Approved.
  
  - f. A Public Hearing for a Proposed Closing to Public Use & Travel of a City Street and Right-of-Way Off of Cottonwood Drive (Pecan Street) and Juniper Road Between Cottonwood Drive and Juniper Road Within the Petersburg Redevelopment & Housing Authority  
Public Hearing  
Professor Witiak  
Professor Witiak suggested that the Housing Authority make plans to include trees.

A motion was approved to sell the land to the Housing Authority for \$2,200.

10. Public Information Period

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

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

Melissa Boyd

Ms. Boyd expressed concern that some Council members don't live in their wards and noted trash in a wooded area near her house.

The City Attorney stated that all Council members lived in their wards.

Barb Rudolph

Ms. Rudolph stated that she would like to see at-large elections, including the election of the Mayor and Vice Mayor. She offered to present on election systems in other cities in Virginia and suggested the City consider a charter change to allow such elections.

Later in the meeting, the city attorney provided stats from the Virginia Municipal League that indicated most cities in Virginia use the ward system.

Professor Witiak

Professor Witiak said she would like to see citizen input on the new courthouse and supported constructing a road in the floodplain on Pocahontas Island.

Karen Wyche

Ms. Wyche, a Pocahontas Island resident, supported the construction of a road in the island's floodplain.

Amanda Wyatt

Ms. Wyatt also supported the construction of a road in the floodplain on Pocahontas Island. She stated that many trucks enter the South Central Wastewater Treatment plant late at night and early in the morning.

### Marlo Greene

Ms. Greene stated support for a road being constructed in the floodplain on Pocahontas Island. She stated that the Friends of the Lower Appomattox River supported the new road. She also stated that 25 or more tractor-trailer trucks entered the South Central Wastewater treatment plant daily.

The City requested data from South Central, which indicates that less than five trucks (including all types of trucks) entered South Central daily during the past year (work days, no weekends). The data also included less than 100 tractor-trailer trucks enter the plant yearly.

FOLAR submitted a letter of support for a \$2.2 million DCR grant to the City to clean up the former Roper property in a floodway and floodplain and turn it into green space that could include a park, recreation field, and walking/biking trails. This is the same area as the one proposed for the new road.

### Kara Stephens

Ms. Stephens said she sees residents walking and jogging through Pocahontas Island, which is becoming more of a shared-use space. She said the island should become a place that all can enjoy.

## 11. Business or reports from the Mayor or other Members of City Council

### Councilman Cuthbert

- Announced upcoming Ward meeting
- Noted pile of trash at 125 Terrace Avenue that had not been removed for two years
- Discussed duplicate real estate bills and Billing/Collections not updating addresses
- Discussed other blighted properties

### Councilman Jones

- Thanked city employees for doing a good job
- Thanked some residents for donating musical instruments for a band project
- Asked residents to help police solve cases – see something, say something

### Councilman Westbrook

- Thanked Parks & Rec for pickleball lessons
- Thanked FOLAR for the Paddle Battle event
- Asked that FOLAR update Council on the Fall Line Trail and Appomattox River Trail
- Reminded citizens to cut grass in yards and along curbs
- Noted increased lighting requested on Elm Street
- Reminded all about the Healthy Trees Seminar
- Stated that early voting starts on September 20

### Councilman Myers

- Stated photo taken of him during Council meetings with his hand on his head does not mean he is not engaged in the meetings

### Councilwoman Smith-Lee

- Asked residents to support athletic teams in the city
- She noted the many upgrades and the softball games being held at the Sports Complex

### Vice Mayor Hill

- Asked citizens to speak of the good news happening in the city
- Asked citizens to help police by letting them know if they have information on a crime

### Mayor Parham

- Noted the success of the Sheriff's Re-entry Forum
- Unveiling of the cottage at First Baptist Church
- Prostate Awareness event upcoming at VSU
- Passing of a friend and resident of Petersburg
- Noted the positive work of Council

#### 12. Items removed from Consent Agenda

None.

#### 13. Finance and Budget Report

None.

#### 14. Unfinished Business

##### a. Extension of Pocahontas Street Through the Roper Site

Public Comment

##### Marlo Greene

Ms. Greene asked that Council approve the road.

A resolution was approved for a road being constructed in the floodplain on the former Roper property, pending any environmental issues from state or federal agencies.

#### 15. New Business

##### a. Resolution Requesting Council Approval for the Selection of Gilbane Building Company and Proceed to Detailed Review for the Construction of the New Petersburg Courthouse

Approved.

b. Consideration of Re/Appointment to the Petersburg Arts Council

Removed from agenda.

c. Consideration of Re-Appointment to the Community Development Block Grant  
Citizen Advisory Board

Removed from agenda.

d. Consideration of Re-Appointment to the Planning Commission

Removed from agenda.

e. Consideration of Re-Appointment to the Petersburg Redevelopment Housing  
Authority

Removed from agenda.

16. City Manager's Report and Special Reports

- Recovery Seminar at Library
- 9/30 – Petersburg Arts Council meeting

17. Business or reports from the Clerk

None.

18. Business or reports from the City Attorney

None.

19. Adjournment