



# COUNCIL

## Communicates

### Highlights from City Council Meetings

**December 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**

[alee@petersburg-va.org](mailto:alee@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  
All were present on rollcall except Councilman Jones.
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 Updates 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 §58.1-3990; 58.1-3980; and 58.1-3981 of the Code of Virginia; and Other Legal Matters Requiring the Advice of the City Attorney; and
  - b. §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
  - c. §2.2-3711(A)(29) of the Code of Virginia for the Purpose of Discussion Regarding the Subject of the Award of a Public Contract Involving the Expenditure of Public Funds 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
  - d. §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; and  
e. §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 the Performance, Assignment, and Appointment of Specific Public Officers of the City of Petersburg.

3. Adjournment

**Regular City 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. Proclamation Recognizing Chair Tammy Alexander for Over a Decade of Service with the Planning Commission
  - b. Proclamation in Memory of Curtis Lyons
  - c. Proclamation in Memory of Mr. Howard and Mrs. Patricia Fitzgerald, Sr.
  - d. Presentation of Certificate of Appreciation to the Petersburg Chapter of The Links, Inc.
6. Presentations
  - a. Presentation by Christa Donohue, Executive Director, Read To Them Dolly Pardon Imagination Library.
  - b. Presentation of 2024 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) by Robinson, Farmer & Cox  
*Postponed to January work session – medical emergency with the auditor.  
The ACFR will be filed by December 31, 2024.*

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:  
November 19, 2024, Closed Session
  - b. Adoption of the 2025 Petersburg City Council Meeting Calendar
  - c. Appointment of Afton Pryor to the Capital Area's Community Action Agency "CAPUP" Board of Directors  
**Motion approved to remove Item C.**
  
9. Official Public Hearings
  - a. Public Hearing of an Ordinance to Amend and Readopt Article 3, Definitions, Article 14, B-1 Shopping Center District Regulations, and Article 23, Supplementary Use Regulations – Special Uses, as Set Forth in the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Petersburg Pertaining to Gathering and Event Uses, Including Nightclubs.  
**Planning staff and Planning Commission recommend approval. No public comments.**  
**Motion to table until the hearing on the noise ordinance was approved.**
  
  - b. Public Hearing of an Ordinance to Amend and Readopt the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Petersburg Pertaining to the Regulation of Alternative Financial Institution/Short-Term Loan Establishment and Small Box Discount Store Uses Within the City  
Public Hearing  
Julian Greene  
Mr. Greene asked that this motion be tabled until the public better understands the ordinance.  
**Approved.**
  
  - c. Public Hearing to Amend and Readopt the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Petersburg Pertaining to the Regulation of Tire Sale and Service Uses Within the City.  
No public comments.  
**Approved.**
  
  - d. Public Hearing for the Consideration of an Ordinance to Amend and Reenact Section 86-31, Limitation on the Number of Pawn Shops, Article II - Pawnbrokers, and of Chapter 86, Secondhand Goods of the Petersburg City Code  
**Approved.**
  
  - e. Public Hearing for the Consideration of an Ordinance to Amend the City Charter to Add Section 2-1.2 to Provide for Non-Partisan Elections of Members of Council  
Public Hearing  
Barb Rudolph  
Ms. Rudolph stated that she supports non-partisan elections.

Dr. Kenneth Lewis

Dr. Lewis stated that he supports non-partisan elections.

Julian Greene

Mr. Greene referenced the 1972 court case dealing with Petersburg representation and the ward system. He stated he supports maintaining party affiliation.

A motion was approved to support non-partisan elections and ask the General Assembly for a charter change.

f. Public Hearing for the Consideration of an Ordinance to Amend Chapter 3-16 of the City Charter Concerning the Powers and Duties of the Collector of Taxes

Public Hearing

Barb Rudolph

Ms. Rudolph stated that she thinks the intent is excellent and commends the City Finance staff for submitting the audit on time this year, but she does not think the charter change is as simple as described. She believes the General Assembly will view this request as a decrease in the Treasurer's duties.

A motion was approved to support the charter change concerning the Powers and Duties of the Collector of Taxes.

g. Public Hearing for Consideration of an Appropriation/Grant from the VA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)/Main Street Program.

Approved.

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 were removed from the consent agenda

Leonard Curry

Mr. Curry stated his concerns regarding Data Centers, including noise, water, and wastewater usage.

Barb Rudolph

Ms. Rudolph talked about comments made about naughty and nice citizens. She commended Wayne Crocker for the Christmas trees displayed in the Library.

Paula Chester

Ms. Chester suggested cleaning buildings, streets, and sidewalks on Sycamore Street. She also asked about the plan for replacing the trees removed on Sycamore Street.

Several business and building owners have asked the City not to replace the trees removed in front of businesses and buildings on Sycamore Street.

Bobby Beverly

Mr. Beverly read a statement about what he described as an incident between him and the Mayor. He also stated that the people of the South are slow and that he wanted the Mayor removed from office.

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

Councilman Cuthbert

He talked about the Ward 4 meeting on the nightclub ordinance and street sweepers.

Councilman Jones

He announced a Ward meeting on December 18. He also encouraged citizens to purchase property in the City and said that people should smile more.

Councilman Westbrook

He thanked Lending Helping Hands for the toy drive and noted that 300 students graduated from VSU in December. He also praised Coach Terry Smith of the Petersburg Speech and Debate Team for his good work and thanked Marquis Allen for the Holiday Parade. The Councilman stated that Financial Literacy programs are needed for the youth and residents of Petersburg.

Councilman Myers

He thanked the City Administration for good work and Richard Harris for fixing sidewalks at Gilfield Baptist.

Councilwoman Smith-Lee

She thanked Scott Bishop for feeding the homeless at Hope Center on Thanksgiving Day and taking meals to residents in local hotels. There will be a Ward 6 meeting on January 29 at Cool Springs Elementary beginning at 6 pm. The Councilwoman thanked all first responders for their hard work throughout the year and Chief Miller and Steve Stinson for helping with ongoing issues in the City.

Vice Mayor Hill

He thanked the Peabody Alumni Association for attending the meeting and Fire and Rescue for their quick response to a recent house fire. He asked that the City consider hiring contractors to help pick up trash. The Vice Mayor thanked Cory Harris for his work with seniors and students.

Mayor Parham

The Mayor thanked the City Council employees and mentioned the success of the TV spots in promoting Petersburg. He also stated that the City had the best Holiday Parade. The Peabody Alumni Association was recognized for attending the Council meeting, and the Mayor noted that apartments were not planned for the Peabody campus. He announced that the Council Organizational meeting would be held on January 7.

12. Items removed from Consent Agenda
  - c. Appointment of Afton Pryor to the Capital Area's Community Action Agency "CAPUP" Board of Directors  
**The appointment of Mr. Pryor was approved.**
13. Finance and Budget Report
  - a. Department of Finance Monthly Update  
**He stated that the City's earned interest to date was \$890,000 and \$220,000.**
14. Unfinished Business
  - a. Consideration of an Ordinance to Amend and Re-Adopt the FY25 Petersburg City Public Schools Budget to Allocate Additional Funds for Food Service Upgrades, to Include Capital & Operational Improvements  
**\$1.5M was approved.**
15. New Business
  - a. Resolution Accepting the Donation of Trees from Virginia State University for Farmer Street Park  
**Approved.**
16. City Manager's Report and Special Reports  
The City Manager announced that the Regional jail was working with the homeless. He stated that the City's bond rating with Standard and Poor's was AA-. He also noted that the City completed the sale of bonds on December 12 for the Courthouse Complex, the Police Station, and the Animal Shelter. He thanked the city team for their hard work.  
  
**A motion to give city employees off on December 23 was approved.**
17. Business or reports from the Clerk  
**None.**
18. Business or reports from the City Attorney  
**None.**
19. Adjournment