

The work session meeting of the Petersburg City Council was held on Tuesday, May 7, 2024, at the Petersburg Public Library. Mayor Parham called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m. The meeting video link is <https://petersburgva.new.swagit.com/videos/304459>.

1. ROLL CALL:

Present:

Council Member Charles H. Cuthbert, Jr.
Council Member Marlow Jones
Council Member W. Howard Myers
Council Member Annette Smith-Lee
Council Member Arnold Westbrook, Jr.
Vice Mayor Darrin Hill
Mayor Samuel Parham

Absent:

Present from City Council Administration:

City Manager John March Altman, Jr.
City Attorney Anthony C. Williams
City Clerk Tangi R. Hill

2. PRAYER:

Vice Mayor Hill led the Council meeting in prayer.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

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

4. DETERMINATION OF THE PRESENCE OF A QUORUM:

A quorum was present.

Mayor Parham stated that Council Member Cuthbert has requested to participate remotely for the remaining of the meeting.

Council Member Cuthbert stated that in accordance with the Council's Rules and Procedures, his remote location will be in transit to Reagan Airport and the specific nature of the personal matter is to attend an appointment out-of-state.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Sheila Coleman, 725 Wilson Street, provided Council with an update on the development project being constructed on Wilson and Shore Streets. She stated that the first house closed in November 2023, and others closed in January 2024, February 2024, and March 2024. The Shore Street project will be complete by the end of September 2024. She shared a video of the homes. A community day is being planned. Planning to start on the next phase in January 2025. All homes are affordable. A ribbon cutting is also planned to allow the Council to view the homes. JC Bynum Construction started in 2010. She noted that the Heights is turning into something immaculate. Mayor Parham recognized Mr. Coleman as well and expressed his appreciation.

Julie Nickerson, 135 W. Old Street, addressed the Council regarding the issues with The Carriage House apartments. She stated that it is currently inhabitable and she is living in a hotel. She spoke

regarding the mite infestation, roaches, and bed bugs that was not disclosed to her prior to moving in. She addressed the building having heat on until June. This is an issue due to her health condition of MS. She stated that Petersburg does not have enough handicap spaces and parking. Mayor Parham asked Ms. Nickerson to provide her information to Officer Hernandez and Chief Christian, so that they can put her in contact with Mr. Jim Reid, the City's Fire Marshall.

Pamela Strauss, 1571 Mt. Vernon Street, spoke regarding meeting civility.

Barb Rudolph, 1675 Mt. Vernon Street, spoke regarding Cordish selection decision. She stated that the Council has addressed these decisions in Closed Session or added action items after exiting Closed Session. She noted that public input was not invited. She spoke regarding Council not being present at the Town Hall meeting hosted by Senator Aird. She stated that this is why the public has no trust in Council.

William Jones, 1504 Duke Drive, stated that he wants a casino, but does not want it forced or hidden. He spoke regarding a Senator Aird not being included in the Council meeting when the decision was made to select Cordish. He noted Cordish having experienced issues obtaining financing on two other occasions, one with Donald J. Trump. He stated that in North Carolina is going through the casino referendum. They are being with charged with "pay to play". There is documentation of Cordish making donations to several representatives in areas that they are looking to build. He stated that he had issues with anything tied to Donald J. Trump. He spoke regarding Governor Youngkin not passing the minimum wage. The City of Petersburg will not vote for an entity which supports Donald J. Trump.

Sherry Johnson, no address provided, thanked Council and stated that she sees the positive results. She wanted to emphasize what the Council is doing right. She spoke of the time that the City was in the negative. She encouraged Council to keep doing what they're doing and ignore the negativity. She expressed her support as long as the Council is moving forward.

Genevieve Lohr, 19 Guarantee Street, stated that we can't solve problems if we don't know what they are. That is not negativity. If City Council does not engage the public, you do not know what the public wants. She added that Council will have to listen. She spoke regarding the City not providing the City employees any type of raise and have not done so in the past two years. She added that the reduction in health care costs is not enough. She stated that \$19 million was placed in the fund balance for 2023. She reiterated that it is not okay to not provide for city employees.

Mayor Parham asked City Manager Altman to address the Public. City Manager Altman stated that even though there is not a COLA in the budget, but \$1.3 million in the budget to begin the implementation of the Classification and Compensation Study. We're looking to implement mid-year.

Carol Harris, no address provided. She spoke regarding the Burg Boys and requesting Council's support. She is asking, as an event planner, to be able to use the Council's name for an upcoming Burg Boys Day event. She noted that Councilman Jones mentioned \$3,000 being given to the Burg Boys from the City that has not been received. She added that she spoke with Councilwoman Smith-Lee regarding a place being needed to hold their banquet.

Mayor Parham recognized Councilman Jones. Councilman Jones recognized her son, as a member of the team. He stated that he challenged them to come to the City Council meeting. Councilman Jones stated that they can have a place to hold their banquet. He suggested the library. He added that the funds are available for the organization, but advised her to follow up with them regarding what is needed to receive those funds.

Councilwoman Smith-Lee added that Council is going to make sure that they have a nice banquet in a nice facility,

Jenn Lowery, Old Street, spoke regarding the casino is not needed at this time. She added that the

casino will take away from small businesses and nonprofits. She feels that there are other recreational things that Petersburg is not taking advantage of such as walking trails, hiking trails, etc. that will attract people to Petersburg. In doing so, it will help us build our schools and business districts that would be more financially stable than a casino. She feels that more input from the community is needed.

Anthony Coleman, 404 North Sycamore Street, spoke in favor of the casino. He added that Portsmouth crime rate is higher than Petersburg. The casino will also bring jobs. He thanked Council for whatever they can do for the Burg Boys as well.

Paula Chester, 1013 Oakmont, thanked the Council for the improvements in Petersburg. She spoke in favor of the casino. She feels that if the City has the opportunity, then it should go for it. She stated that in order to have nice things, the City will have to pay for it. Petersburg is no comparison to Richmond, Prince George, or Chesterfield. She added that you can not come before the citizens every time or you will get nothing done.

Hearing no one else, Mayor Parham concluded the public comment period.

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

- a. Minutes of Previous Meetings:
 - April 16, 2024 – City Council Special Meeting Closed Session
 - April 16, 2024 – City Council Work Session
 - April 24, 2024 – City Council Special Meeting Closed Session
 - May 1, 2024 – City Council Special Meeting Closed Session
- b. 2024-CPA-01: A Request to Schedule a Public Hearing and Consideration in Accordance with Section 15.2.2225 of the Code of Virginia to Repeal the City of Petersburg Comprehensive Plan 2040 and Adopt a New Comprehensive Plan Titled PetersburgNEXT, which Includes Updates to Demographics, Transportation Improvements, Land Use, and Other Relevant Information. The draft plan can be viewed online at <https://petersburgvanext.com>.
- c. Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services – Four for Life Grant (First Reading)
- d. A Request to Schedule a Public Hearing for the Consideration of the City of Petersburg's FY2024-25 Proposed Operating Budget Ordinance (First Reading)
- e. A Request to Schedule a Public Hearing for Consideration of an Ordinance to Appropriate the Budget for Petersburg City Public Schools for FY2024-25 (First Reading)
- f. A Request to Schedule a Public Hearing for the Acceptance of the 525776-FY24-Community Corrections & Pretrial Services One-Time Funding in the Amount of \$22,793 (526361)
- g. A Request to Schedule a Public Hearing and Consideration of an Ordinance to Authorize David Breidenbach; G. Grattan, LLC and Hereinafter "Virginia Green" to Donate and Provide Maintenance Services to the Property at the Intersection of Woodland Road and Oakridge Road
- h. A Request to Schedule a Public Hearing for the Consideration of an Ordinance to Adopt the Tourism Development Plan
- i. A Request to Schedule a Public Hearing for Consideration of an Ordinance to Adopt the Tourism Plan Developed in Conjunction with the Commonwealth of Virginia's Tourism Development Financing Program, to Endorse a Proposed Tourism Project, and to Authorize Other Actions Consistent with the State Tourism Gap Financing

Vice Mayor Hill made a motion to approve the consent agenda, as read. Council Member Smith-Lee seconded the motion. The motion was approved on roll call of 6-0-1. On roll call vote, yes: Jones, Myers, Westbrook, Smith-Lee, Hill, and Parham; no: none; abstaining: Cuthbert; absent: none

7. SPECIAL REPORTS:

- a. Presentation on Upcoming Agenda Item – Formally Adopting Approved Zoning Items Without Ordinances

Naomi Siodmok, Director of Planning and Community Development, stated that the Department of Planning and Community Development will be submitting a formal request to the City Council to reapprove, via the May 21, 2024 consent agenda, ordinances that had previously received approval but remained pending formal codification. The dates of these zoning actions range from September 2, 2014 to July 7, 2020. These ordinances have been before Council previously, voted on, and passed; however, they were not formally finalized due to the lack of the inclusion of an ordinance when approval action was taken. All affected parties have proceeded with the assumption of approval, so this agenda is for administrative and legal purposes only. The City Attorney has been contacted and has verified that this process is appropriate for formal adoption of these ordinances.

The ordinances submitted for approval are Planning Department related ordinances only and fall into three categories: Special Use Permits, Rezoning, and Community Development Block Grant Use approvals. There are 23 total ordinances; 14 Special Use Permits, 8 Rezoning, and 1 CDBG.

Key Notes:

- Between the years of 2014-2020, there were 23 ordinances not included in the agenda packets for Council's consideration.
- Council will take consider formal adoption of ordinances previously approved by City Council between 2014-2020 under the consent agenda on May 21, 2024.

Vice Mayor Hill asked if the zoning items will be reviewed by the City Attorney before being considered by Council. Director of Planning and Community Development Siodmok stated that they items will be reviewed by the City Attorney prior to being considered by Council.

b. Partnership for Petersburg Fund Presentation

Kevin Foster, Executive Director, of the John Randolph Foundation, provided Council with an overview of the Foundation and the benefits of the City establishing a Partnership Petersburg Fund. Questions from Council were addressed.

City Manager Altman informed Council that an agreement will be presented for Council to consider at their May 21, 2024 meeting.

8. **MONTHLY REPORTS:**

There were no items for this portion of the agenda.

9. **FINANCE AND BUDGET REPORT:**

FY2023-2024 City of Petersburg Budget vs. Actuals

Garry Cozier, Budget Manager, presented the FY2023-2024 City of Petersburg Budget vs. Actuals. Questions from Council were addressed.

10. **CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE:**

There were no items for this portion of the agenda.

11. **UTILITIES:**

Public Works Monthly Report

New Utility Bill Format

Gerrit VanVoorhees, Information Technology Director, presented the new utility bill format. Questions

from Council were addressed. Mr. VanVoorhees stated that the new billing format will be mailed out later this month.

12. STREETS:

Randall Williams, Assistant Director of Public Works, provided City Council with the Public Works & Utilities Monthly Report. A status update was provided for work orders and projects.

Discussion was held between staff and Council.

13. FACILITIES:

This report was provided under the Public Works & Utilities Monthly Report.

14. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

There were no items for this portion of the agenda.

15. CITY MANAGER'S AGENDA

City Manager Altman reminded the public that the budget public hearing will be held at the Council's next meeting.

16. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM THE CLERK:

There were no items for this portion of the agenda.

17. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM THE CITY ATTORNEY:

City Attorney Williams stated that in 27 years of public service, 20 of which serving as Chief legal counsel to Virginia public localities, he has yet to see a Council with more integrity, fortitude, and doing what is right for its citizens.

Mayor Parham wished all the mothers, a happy Mother's Day and invited them to the Mother's Day program on Friday.

18. ADJOURNMENT:

The City Council adjourned at 6:33 p.m.

Adopted the 21st day of May, 2024.



Clerk of City Council

APPROVED:



Mayor