

The regular meeting of the Petersburg City Council was held on Tuesday, September 16, 2025 at the Petersburg Public Library. Mayor Parham called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. The meeting video link is <https://petersburgva.new.swagit.com/videos/355697>

1. ROLL CALL:

Present:

Samuel Parham, Mayor – Ward 3
Darrin Hill, Vice Mayor – Ward 2
Marlow Jones, Councilor – Ward 1
Charles Cuthbert, Jr., Councilor – Ward 4
W. Howard Myers, Councilor – Ward 5
Annette Smith-Lee, Councilor – Ward 6
Arnold Westbrook, Jr., Councilor – Ward 7

Absent:

Present from City 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.

City Council held a moment of silence in honor of Dr. Bobby Duhart.

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.

5. PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATION OF CEREMONIAL PROCLAMATIONS

a. Hispanic Heritage Month Proclamation

Mayor Parham presented the Proclamation Recognizing September 15, 2025 through October 15, 2025 as National Hispanic Heritage Month.

6. RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC INFORMATION POSTED

There were none.

7. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA (TO INCLUDE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS)

a. Minutes of Previous Meetings

- July 15, 2025 Meeting Minutes with Correction (Page 11 – Changed Ms. Jones to Ms. James)

- September 2, 2025 Closed Session Minutes
- September 2, 2025 Special Joint Meeting with the Planning Commission Minutes
- September 2, 2025 City Council Work Session

Council Member Westbrook made a motion to adopt the consent agenda as presented. Vice Mayor Hill seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Jones, Myers, Westbrook, Smith-Lee, Hill, and Parham; no: N/A; Abstain: N/A; Absent: N/A.

8. PRESENTATIONS

a. Capital Plan and Utility Enterprise Study Presentation – Davenport Public Finance

David Rose, Senior Vice President and Manager of Public Finance with Davenport & Company, gave a presentation on the Capital Plan and Utility Enterprise Study. He explained that this was a continuation of their discussions regarding the Multi-Year Strategic Plan of Finance. They had previously recommended to Council a strategy to fund their \$250 million of identified Capital General Fund needs, which was a \$30 million line of credit or Bond Anticipation Note (BAN) on an interim basis. However, there was approximately \$12 million in near-term needs that was recommended to be funded partially by that same line of credit in order to avoid using reserves.

Mr. Rose said that regarding the Utility Enterprise Fund, the City had identified about \$190 million in Utility Capital needs; Davenport recommended the City move forward with a separate \$40 million line of credit or BAN on an interim basis to begin investment in the system, along with low-interest loans and grants. He noted that Jacobs and Davenport would present the Comprehensive Rate Study recommendations and a proposed rate plan to Council on October 7, 2025, with the goal of identifying the appropriate rates to maintain the City's Utilities system into the future.

Mr. Rose summarized that Davenport's recommendation tonight included consideration of a reimbursement resolution in the amount of \$4 million to allow for tax-exempt purchases of vehicles the City had identified in their Capital needs. After their October 7 work session on the rate study, on October 21, 2025, Council would hold public hearings on the Interim Financings and Rate Plan, at which point Council would consider selecting the preferred lender, adopting financing resolutions, and implementing the Rate Plan. Finally, the working group would coordinate and finalize the numbers and documents as part of this plan, then close on the Interim Financings in November, at which point the funds would be available to the City.

Council Member Jones asked if the \$4 million for vehicles was inclusive of all the City's vehicle needs.

City Manager Altman replied that this specific funding would only cover the cost of police vehicles. He said that more discussions were necessary regarding the other transportation needs of the City.

Council Member Cuthbert noted that Council had not adopted a Capital Improvement budget, so he was unsure of how they could determine the best way to finance the improvements when they did not know the exact costs.

Mr. Rose clarified that the amounts identified in the Plan of Finance were not amounts that must immediately or aggressively be spent by the City; rather, they had identified borrowing mechanisms that the City could strategically use when they did identify the costs of their Capital Improvements. He said that the \$4 million was confirmed to be an immediate need, which was why they recommended it be readily available as opposed to the other lines of credit. He emphasized that they only recommended using their lines of credit once the City had sufficient revenue from Cordish to pay

them. He said that it was more economical in terms of both time and money to create this Plan of Finance in advance.

Mayor Parham noted that at their Council retreat, they had thoroughly discussed the Plan of Finance and what would be necessary to meet their most immediate Capital needs in the City.

Council Member Cuthbert questioned whether it was essential to purchase all the police vehicles at one time with the \$4 million as recommended by Davenport, or whether there should be a more incremental replacement cycle. He expressed concern that Council had not followed appropriate procedure and that they had not heard all of the facts and options of how to fund the City's Capital Improvements. He emphasized that they should adopt a budget before they borrow money to pay for it.

Vice Mayor Hill made a motion to direct City staff and Davenport staff to move forward with the Plan of Finance. Council Member Smith-Lee seconded the motion.

Council Member Cuthbert said that he must vote against the motion because they should adopt a budget before borrowing funds.

Council Member Jones expressed his support for the motion. He said that Council was highly aware of the current needs of the City, and this Plan of Finance was an opportunity to make sound financial borrowing decisions in a proactive manner. He noted that many of the City's current infrastructure issues stemmed from past inaction and allowing things to degrade, and now Council must prioritize certain items in order to make healthy progress. He felt confident in Davenport's recommendations on this matter.

On a roll call vote, voting yes: Jones, Myers, Westbrook, Smith-Lee, Hill, and Parham; no: Cuthbert; Abstain: N/A; Absent: N/A.

9. OFFICIAL PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. A Public Hearing for Consideration of an Amendment to the FY26 Grants Fund

Garry Cozier, Budget Manager, provided a brief summary of the item. He reported that the City had received over \$12 million in fully funded grants, which required no match from the City. These grants would be distributed across multiple agencies.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing. Seeing no speakers, he closed the public hearing.

Vice Mayor Hill made a motion to adopt the Ordinances to approve the amendments to the FY26 Grants Fund. Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

Council Member Jones clarified that these grants were for specific projects, not just unassigned dollars.

Mr. Cozier confirmed that it was correct; the specific amounts and intended uses were detailed in the Grant Ordinances.

On a roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Jones, Myers, Westbrook, Smith-Lee, Hill, and Parham; no: N/A; Abstain: N/A; Absent: N/A.

b. A Public Hearing for Consideration of the FY26 Carry Forward Requests from the Previous Fiscal Year

Garry Cozier, Budget Manager, provided a brief summary of the item. He explained that approximately \$1 million was requested to be used as an Assigned Fund Balance to complete capital projects from the previous fiscal year. He noted that this funding had been appropriated last fiscal year and would be spent on unfinished FY25 budgeted items.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing.

Tina Norr, 120 Leavenworth Street, asked for confirmation that these funds would be spent this year.

Seeing no further speakers, Mayor Parham closed the public hearing.

City Manager Altman clarified that the intent was to spend all of these funds within this fiscal year.

Mr. Cozier added that the reasons for unspent budgeted funds may vary between projects and departments, and the expenditure of funds did not always align with the end of the fiscal year.

Vice Mayor Hill made a motion to adopt the Ordinance to approve the FY26 Carry Forward Requests from the Previous Fiscal Year. Council Member Westbrook seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Jones, Myers, Westbrook, Smith-Lee, Hill, and Parham; no: N/A; Abstain: N/A; Absent: N/A.

c. A Public Hearing for Consideration of an Amendment to the FY26 General Fund

Garry Cozier, Budget Manager, provided a brief summary of the item. He explained that this was the item referred to earlier by their Davenport representatives and would approve the \$4 million for vehicle and equipment purchases that are needed within the City. He noted that attached was a reimbursement resolution, which would be used when the City received their interim financing so the City could reimburse itself for this purchase.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing. Seeing no speakers, he closed the public hearing.

Vice Mayor Hill made a motion to adopt the Ordinance to approve the Amendment to the FY26 General Fund. Council Member Myers seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Jones, Myers, Westbrook, Smith-Lee, Hill, and Parham; no: N/A; Abstain: N/A; Absent: N/A.

d. Public Hearing for Consideration of an Ordinance Authorizing the City Manager to Execute the Purchase Agreement Between the City of Petersburg and Dale Pittman for the Development of 117 Lafayette Street (Portion of Property) Located in Petersburg, VA

Brian Moore, Director of Economic Development, introduced the item.

Matthew Pittman, representing the applicant, presented information on the proposal to purchase a portion of the City-owned property at 117 Lafayette Street to be used as parking for a newly renovated commercial property. He explained that his family purchased 303 Commerce Street in 2020 and rebuilt the structure; however, this property had no parking along Commerce Street or any access from Davis Street. The applicant proposed purchasing a 2,300-square-foot portion of 117 Lafayette Street to convert into four to six parking spaces. They would be creating a gravel lot with granite curbing and landscaping. He stated that they proposed to purchase the property at 100% of the assessed value of the subdivided parcel.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing. Seeing no speakers, he closed the public hearing.

Council Member Myers made a motion to adopt the Ordinance authorizing the City manager to Execute the Purchase Agreement Between the City of Petersburg and Dale Pittman for the Development of 117 Lafayette Street (Portion of Property) Located in Petersburg, VA. Vice Mayor Hill seconded the motion.

Council Member Cuthbert asked if it was possible to include a restriction on the deed of property that would prevent the property from being redeveloped in a manner that would negatively impact parking in the future.

Mr. Pittman said that the applicant would have no issue with that.

Council Member Cuthbert asked if Council Member Myers would consider a friendly amendment to his motion to stipulate that no built structures would be placed on the property.

Council Member Myers said that he did not see the reason for doing so, as the property was not large enough for a structure to be built there.

City Manager Altman clarified that this parcel was located within the floodway, so no structure could be built there anyway.

On a roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Jones, Myers, Westbrook, Smith-Lee, Hill, and Parham; no: N/A; Abstain: N/A; Absent: N/A.

- e. A Public Hearing for Consideration of an Ordinance to Approve a Request by Anthony Lewis, High Stepper Enterprise, LLC, on Behalf of Paula Wynn Harris, for a Special Use Permit to Operate a Stand-Alone Vehicle Repair Shop at 1311 Commerce Street, Parcel ID 024150800, in the M-1, Light Industrial Zoning District

Jared Crews, Interim Director of Planning and Community Development, provided a brief summary of the item. He explained that the request was for a special use permit (SUP) to operate a stand-alone vehicle repair shop at 1311 Commerce Street in the M-1, Light Industrial Zoning District. The subject property is 0.336 acres and there is an existing structure on the site, formerly operated as a commercial repair shop. The applicant requested to improve the overall site and resume use of the existing structure as a repair shop. The application included plans for paving, parking, and additional fencing.

Mr. Crews noted that the proposed use did not align with the property's Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designation of Historic Neighborhood, but the current M-1 zoning allowed for a variety of uses and staff's analysis concluded that the SUP with proposed conditions would mitigate any adverse impacts. The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the SUP with conditions at their July 10, 2025 meeting and staff recommended approval as well.

Anthony Lewis, High Stepper Enterprise LLC, stated that his family's goals with this property were to grow their auto repair shop into a broader, mutually beneficial resource for the City. He explained that as part of this auto shop service, they aimed to hire and offer apprenticeship programs to young people and formerly incarcerated individuals in order to provide meaningful training and employment opportunities and to strengthen the City's economy overall. He requested Council approve the request for a special use permit and asked Council to consider working together in the future to connect with local schools, apprenticeship registry, and reentry coordinators, as well as provide letters of support for grant opportunities.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing.

Carolyn Jones El, 582 Old Wagner Road, stated that this would be greatly beneficial to Petersburg, especially to high schoolers who may want to learn these types of skills. She noted

that it was unreasonably difficult to get an oil change in Petersburg, and this proposed auto shop would be a great solution.

Mayor Parham closed the public hearing.

Council Member Jones recalled that he took auto shop classes as a student at Petersburg High School, but there were no apprenticeship programs to follow that course. He agreed that Mr. Lewis was offering something great to the City with this request. He suggested they look into providing these types of programs as part of the Petersburg Alternative School. He expressed concern that the costs and uneven requirements for special use permits could make them prohibitive to businesses and may result in unintended consequences. Additionally, he questioned the rationale for requiring a new special use permit simply because the legally nonconforming status of the property had expired.

City Manager Altman clarified that all auto shops require a special use permit within the City, regardless of location. However, Council may consider reviewing the Zoning Ordinance to determine whether it may be appropriate to allow auto shops by right in certain locations, such as industrial or business districts.

Council Member Jones suggested some of the conditions should be amended. There were multiple conditions that were unreasonable or did not fully address the operations necessary to run a full-service auto repair shop. He emphasized that one of the conditions was to require the bay doors stay closed while work was ongoing, but he was seriously concerned that this meant workers may be subjected to toxic fumes.

Council Member Smith-Lee made a motion to approve the Special Use Permit for a stand-alone vehicle repair shop at 1311 Commerce Street, with conditions as amended. Vice Mayor Hill seconded the motion.

City Manager Altman clarified that Condition 5 would be eliminated, Condition 1 would be changed to 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. seven days a week, and Condition 4 would be changed from seven days to 14 days.

Council Member Jones suggested that Condition 3 should include some type of record for staff so they could keep track of vehicles and ensure they were not sitting there indefinitely.

City Manager Altman said that he believed they could work that out with staff.

On a roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Jones, Myers, Westbrook, Smith-Lee, Hill, and Parham; no: N/A; Abstain: N/A; Absent: N/A.

- f. A Public Hearing for Consideration of an Ordinance to Approve an Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Petersburg for the Purpose of Allowing Municipal Animal Pounds or Shelters in the A, Agricultural Zoning District and Removing a Requirement for an Approved Special Use Permit for Public and Government Buildings and Public Utilities and Services in the City

Jared Crews, Interim Director of Planning and Community Development, provided a brief summary of the item. He explained that the City's Zoning Ordinance currently requires the City to grant a special use permit for any new government buildings and, in some cases, new public utilities. Additionally, the Ordinance currently limits all animal shelters to the M-1, Light Industrial Zoning District even if the facility is owned and operated by the City. On June 5, City Council directed staff to prepare a draft ordinance for consideration to address these items by removing the requirement for a special use permit for government facilities and utilities in residential districts

and allowing municipally-owned animal shelters in the A, Agricultural District, which includes the proposed location for the City's new shelter.

Mr. Crews summarized that at their July 10, 2025 meeting, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended the Ordinance be approved in part to allow municipal animal shelters in the Agricultural Zoning District but to keep the requirement in place for a special use permit for government buildings and certain utilities and services. Staff have included both the original recommendation from staff and the Planning Commission's recommendation for the Council to consider.

City Manager Altman noted that City Council had originally directed staff to draft an Ordinance that would allow for the City to be exempt from the special use permit requirement for municipal buildings in order to avoid having the City place conditions on itself when it sought to establish a new municipal facility. However, the Planning Commission had recommended otherwise, and this was how they arrived at the current juncture with this item.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing. Seeing no speakers, he closed the public hearing.

Council Member Jones clarified that the location identified for the new animal shelter was located outside of the floodplain.

City Manager Altman confirmed that was correct.

Council Member Jones asked how this would affect agriculture in the area.

Mr. Crews explained that the impact would be specific to the property and its neighbors, so they would review it from that standpoint.

Council Member Myers made a motion to adopt the Ordinance as included in Exhibit B. Vice Mayor Hill seconded the motion.

Council Member Cuthbert asked if the public would have an opportunity to comment on future placement of government buildings.

Mr. Crews confirmed that there was a state requirement that the Planning Commission must review public facilities to determine compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, and that would also be reviewed by Council. However, that could be held as a public hearing or as a general business item, so the choice to hold a public hearing would ultimately be the discretion of the Board.

Council Member Cuthbert agreed with the Planning Commission's recommendation to maintain the special use permit requirement and therefore the public hearings for municipal facilities. He felt it was important to preserve those opportunities for public comment.

Mayor Parham clarified that there had been a public hearing on this item, and the City had followed due process on this issue.

On a roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Jones, Myers, Westbrook, Smith-Lee, Hill, and Parham; no: N/A; Abstain: N/A; Absent: N/A.

- g. A Public Hearing for Consideration of an Ordinance to Approve an Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Petersburg for the Purpose of Incorporating Additional Landscaping Requirements for New Land Development and Off-Street Parking Areas

Jared Crews, Interim Director of Planning and Community Development, provided a brief summary of the item. He explained that this proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance would

provide additional standards for landscaping for new land development in the City. This was part of a larger effort to promote public health and increase sustainability, specifically regarding tree preservation and plantings for private development. The City worked with the Green Infrastructure Center to draft a Strategic Tree Canopy Plan and hired a City Arborist, and they had assisted in the drafting of this amendment in order to ensure they incorporated best practices and integrated with their other plans. He summarized the proposed changes and the Comprehensive Plan considerations. At its July 10, 2025 meeting, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the proposed amendment as drafted, and staff recommended approval as drafted.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing. Seeing no speakers, he closed the public hearing.

Vice Mayor Hill made a motion to approve the Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Petersburg for the purpose of incorporating additional landscaping requirements for new land development and off-street parking areas as drafted. Council Member Westbrook seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Jones, Myers, Westbrook, Smith-Lee, Hill, and Parham; no: N/A; Abstain: N/A; Absent: N/A.

- h. A Public Hearing for Consideration of an Ordinance to Approve an Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Petersburg for the Purpose of Updating and Clarifying Sign and Advertising Regulations to Address Ongoing Complaints and Issues Pertaining to Certain Advertising Devices Throughout the City

Jared Crews, Interim Director of Planning and Community Development, provided a brief summary of the item. He explained that this proposed Ordinance would approve an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance in order to update and clarify regulations on signage to address ongoing complaints and enforcement challenges. He summarized the proposed changes. At its July 10, 2025 meeting, the Planning Commission recommended approval (5-1) of the proposed amendment as drafted and staff recommended approval as drafted.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing. Seeing no speakers, he closed the public hearing.

Council Member Jones noted that the consideration of "attractiveness" with regards to signage seemed like a personal preference rather than an issue of zoning compliance. Furthermore, he was concerned that the actual issue was with the placement of current signage rather than the future signage that this Zoning Ordinance amendment was meant to address.

City Manager Altman acknowledged Council Member Jones' point; however, these proposed changes were meant to prevent new signage-related issues from occurring so they could effectively resolve the existing problems in the City.

Council Member Cuthbert asked if the City Attorney had reviewed this proposed Ordinance.

City Attorney Williams replied that he had reviewed the Board's agenda which included this item, but he had not reviewed the specific language of the proposed Ordinance.

Council Member Cuthbert suggested some of the Ordinance language be clarified and specified in order to prevent technical loopholes and misunderstandings.

Vice Mayor Hill noted that some of the interpretations may be a matter of perspective; however, improved signage regulations were crucial, so he cautioned Council against waiting too long before adopting this amendment.

Council Member Jones made a motion to table the Ordinance until Council's next work session. Vice Mayor Hill seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Jones, Myers, Westbrook, Smith-Lee, Hill, and Parham; no: N/A; Abstain: N/A; Absent: N/A.

- i. Public Hearing for Consideration of an Ordinance Authorizing the City Manager to Execute the Purchase Agreements Between the City of Petersburg and Daniel Smith Real Estate LLC, for the Development of Lots 4, 6, 9, and 12 Ross Court, Located in Petersburg, Virginia

Brian Moore, Director of Economic Development, introduced the item.

Tanya Smith, representing Daniel Smith Real Estate LLC, presented information on the request. She explained that she currently owned three properties on Ross Court and wished to purchase these vacant lots from the City in order to provide new and improved housing opportunities for residents.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing. Seeing no speakers, he closed the public hearing.

Council Member Myers made a motion to adopt the Ordinance authorizing the City Manager to execute the Purchase Agreement between the City of Petersburg and Daniel Smith Real Estate LLC for the development of Lots 4, 6, 9, and 12 Ross Court, located in Petersburg, Virginia. Council Member Westbrook seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Jones, Myers, Westbrook, Smith-Lee, Hill, and Parham; no: N/A; Abstain: N/A; Absent: N/A.

Council Member Jones noted that Ross Court had some issues in terms of emergency vehicle access and parking.

Ms. Smith noted that there were City-owned alleyways on either side of the property; however, they were presently overgrown with trees.

Council Member Myers requested the City Manager to work with Ms. Smith to remedy the access issues.

City Manager Altman confirmed he would do so.

- j. A Public Hearing for Consideration of an Ordinance to Approve Awarding a 1.5% One-Time Bonus (Approved by the Virginia General Assembly and Governor) to Employees of the City of Petersburg Department of Social Services

William D'Aiuto, Director of Social Services, provided a brief summary of the item. He explained that in March 2025, the Virginia General Assembly and Governor had approved funding in the 2024-2025 Appropriation Act (Item 469 #1c) for all state employees and certain state-supported local employees, including local Departments of Social Services. He summarized that this Ordinance would approve a 1.5% one-time bonus to employees of the City of Petersburg Department of Social Services at a total cost of \$62,064.11, with the cost to the City being \$9,619.94 and the state paying the remaining \$52,444.17. Staff recommended adoption of the Ordinance in order to award the bonuses to DSS employees.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing. Seeing no speakers, he closed the public hearing.

Vice Mayor Hill made a motion to adopt the Ordinance to approve awarding a 1.5% one-time bonus to employees of the City of Petersburg Department of Social Services. Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

The Council Members all expressed their gratitude to Mr. D'Aiuto and the Social Services staff.

On a roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Jones, Myers, Westbrook, Smith-Lee, Hill, and Parham; no: N/A; Abstain: N/A; Absent: N/A.

10. PUBLIC INFORMATION PERIOD

Julian Greene, 1625 Blair Road, stated that first, he wanted to mention that he had previously met with the City Manager and Council Member Myers regarding a planned event and he wanted to ask the City Manager when they would be receiving the necessary documentation to proceed. Additionally, he was present to discuss the Peabody Academic Learning and Development Center as an important educational facility as well as a precious historic resource. He emphasized that this building was the first public high school for Black students in the nation as well as North America. The building had been duly represented by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) and the National Register of Historic Places. It had been acknowledged by historians that there were limited things that could be done with that complex. He asked Council to consider "All Good things Will Be Added Unto You" as performed by Phylicia Rashad and choirs from Morehouse and Spellman Colleges.

Carolyn Jones El, 582 Old Wagner Road, expressed concern that at 144 S. Sycamore Street, the staff members had to deal with very upset members of the public who often were angry and abusive due to issues with their tax bills. She wanted to bring this to the attention of Council because the consistently aggressive tone was alarming, and she was concerned for those staff members' safety. She noted that when she went to the office in person to clarify a mistake on her tax bill, staff informed her that they had difficulty returning calls because they could only make calls when they were not busy handling in-person cases. This greatly exacerbated the issue, so she would suggest they create a better system that would ensure the wellbeing of their staff. She added that South Crater Road needed to be paved because its current condition was going to cause serious damage to people's vehicles.

11. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM THE MAYOR OR OTHER MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

Council Member Cuthbert asked when the revised vape shop ordinance would be considered again by Council.

Mr. Crews said that it would likely be presented to the Council around December 2025.

Council Member Cuthbert said that he had a ward meeting scheduled for 5:30 p.m., here in the library, on September 18 that would focus on the issue of speeding. He encouraged the public to join him and discuss the current challenges their community was facing. Additionally, he hoped the Council would only have joint public hearings with the Planning Commission if it was essential. He reported that he recently had a very constructive meeting with Council Member Jones and School Board members from Wards 1 and 4, and he was grateful for the relaxed yet constructive conversation they had about increasing vocational opportunities in the public school system. He said that on the topic of streetlights, he was committed to ensuring all streetlights in Petersburg were burning, and impressive progress had been made in that regard. They initially had over 200 streetlights that needed fixed and now only 83 needed to be fixed, which he was currently working on with staff. He gave thanks to staff for making these major improvements to their City.

Council Member Jones thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting.

Council Member Myers announced that Ms. Nicole Loving was doing her second annual Celebrating Recovery and Saving Lives Event, which would be held here at the library on September 24, 2025 from

11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. He welcomed everyone to attend and come together in support of those in recovery.

Council Member Westbrook thanked Parks and Recreation staff for the work being done in Legends Park, which was due to be completed in a few months. He hoped they could make some further improvements, so their children had enhanced recreational opportunities. Additionally, the Honors College had recently hosted a few delegations of African leaders who expressed great interest in partnering with Petersburg in their future endeavors. He emphasized that the things their City was doing would have a global effect, and he hoped they could all work together to provide world-class experiences for individuals, businesses, and leaders. Next, he wanted to announce that this was Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, and he encouraged everyone to wear the color orange in recognition.

Council Member Westbrook announced that he would be hosting a Ward 7 meeting on September 30, 2025 at Pleasants Lane Elementary School. They would be discussing a variety of topics, and staff from the Department of Social Services would be present to review the Partnership for Peace pilot program, which was a collaboration with the Nobel Peace Center. He would be providing further information on that at a future Council meeting in addition to the ward meeting. He thanked Council for holding a moment of silence for Dr. Duhart, who was his own child's pediatrician as well as the pediatrician for many other children in the area. He was saddened and alarmed that there was no pediatrician within the City of Petersburg, and he hoped they could change that quickly.

Council Member Westbrook said that finally, he wanted to express his deep concern regarding the lack of empathy given to Black victims of gun violence. He asked everyone to please reflect on the lives and legacies of people such as Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Sandra Bland, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Jordan Davis, and many more that should be given more thought than just a one-week headline. He said that these names were the sounds of America being forced to reflect; yet, rather than building monuments to their memory or teaching their stories in their schools, this nation instead gave platforms to voices that denied the very pain these families still carry and African-American communities still carried. He emphasized that this was not justice nor honor; it was hypocrisy. He stated that in Petersburg, they could set a higher standard by remembering, honoring, and telling the truth without biasness. He said that they could disagree without resorting to generalizations or "isms." He asked everyone to argue from the standpoint of truth, rather than accusatory remarks. He said that the measure of a nation was who it chooses to remember, and if America chose not to remember, he hoped that Petersburg would do so as he personally would do.

Council Member Smith-Lee thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting. She announced that the P.T. Taylor Downtown Churches United Walk Against Hunger would be on October 4, 2025 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Poplar Lawn Park and would be approximately three miles in total. She encouraged everyone to come out, help them feed the community and get a T-shirt with a \$20 donation.

Vice Mayor Hill acknowledged that some of the City Council meetings had been longer than usual recently; however, that was partially due to participation from the public, which was the purpose of these meetings. He asked the public to please continue keeping their neighborhoods clean by picking up trash, debris, and keeping lawn clippings and leaves out of the streets to prevent clogging their stormwater drainage systems. He asked everyone to join the call for peace throughout the nation.

12. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

There were none.

13. FINANCE AND BUDGET REPORT

a. Department of Finance Monthly Update

Garry Cozier, Budget Manager, provided the Department of Finance Monthly Update. He summarized the budget versus actual expenditures, which were provided in the Board packet.

14. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none.

15. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Adoption of Resolution in Support of the Appomattox River Trail – Rail Crossing Transportation Alternative Project

Vice Mayor Hill stated that this item was removed from the agenda.

- b. Adoption of Resolution in Support of the Appomattox River Trail – Grove Avenue Transportation Alternative Project

Vice Mayor Hill stated that this item was removed from the agenda.

16. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT AND SPECIAL REPORTS

John Altman, City Manager, noted that Items 15a and 15b were removed from tonight's agenda because after the agenda was published, staff learned the City's match for those projects had risen from \$3.8 million to \$5.8 million, so they decided to withdraw the resolutions and determine the best way to fund those projects at a later date.

Council Member Cuthbert asked if the City Manager thought staff could bring those items back to the Council before the end of this year.

City Manager Altman confirmed that staff would provide an update at that time.

Council Member Westbrook asked if Friends of the Lower Appomattox River (FOLAR) could present information on this issue to Council.

City Manager Altman clarified that FOLAR could not make the match necessary for the project, unfortunately. He said that staff would be working to see how they could make it work, as everyone agreed they were important projects for the region.

17. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM THE CLERK

Tangi Hill, City Clerk, stated that she had nothing to report this evening.

18. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM THE CITY ATTORNEY

Anthony Williams, City Attorney, stated that he had nothing to report this evening.

19. ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Westbrook made a motion to adjourn. All members of the Council present voted in the affirmative. Meeting adjourned.

The City Council adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Adopted: 10/07/2025

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Samuel Parham", written over a horizontal line.

Mayor, Samuel Parham

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Tangi R. Hill", written over a horizontal line.

City Clerk, Tangi R. Hill