

The regular meeting of the Petersburg City Council was held on June 16, 2026 at Petersburg Public Library. Mayor Parham called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The meeting video link is <https://petersburgva.new.swagit.com/videos/391253>

1. ROLL CALL:

Present:

Samuel Parham, Mayor -- Ward 3
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:

Darrin Hill, Vice Mayor -- Ward 2

Present from City Administration:

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

2. PRAYER

Council Member Smith-Lee led the Council meeting in prayer.

3. PRAYER 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

There were no items under this portion of the agenda.

6. RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC INFORMATION POSTED

There were no items under this portion of the agenda.

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

a. Minutes of Previous Meetings:

- June 2, 2026 Closed Session
- June 2, 2026 Work Session

Council Member Smith-Lee made a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Council Member Myers seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

8. OFFICIAL PUBLIC HEARINGS

- a. A Public Hearing for Joseph Crawford, J Crawford LLC, to Appeal a Decision Made by the Architectural Review Board to Deny Previously-Completed Removal of Chimneys and Replacement at Roof at 224 South South Street in the Folly Castle Historic District

Jared Crews, Interim Director of Planning and Community Development, presented a summary of the item. He explained that this was a public hearing for an appeal to a decision made by the Architectural Review Board to deny the replacement of a roof and the removal of two chimneys at 224 South Street. He explained that in March 2026, staff was made aware that the building's standing seam metal roof was being replaced with an asphalt shingle roof and the two existing chimneys were being removed.

Mr. Crews stated that the owner was informed that this work required approval by the Architectural Review Board (ARB), and on April 8 the ARB reviewed the request by the applicant to approve the previously completed and ongoing work. The ARB denied the request, and on May 4, the applicant filed a notice to appeal the decision. On May 13, the ARB voted to allow 24 months from the April decision to complete the work to replace the metal roof and the chimneys.

Mr. Crews explained that there were several reasons for denial of the request. The Historic Districts Design Guidelines and Secretary of Interior's Standards noted that if replacement of features was necessary, the materials and designs should match what was removed. Furthermore, the home was a contributing structure in the Folly Castle Historic District and loss of the chimneys and roof could risk the City's Certified Local government status with the Department of Historic Resources. Finally, per City Code, work within a local Historic District should be reviewed and approved prior to being completed. The request before Council was to determine whether to uphold or reverse the decision of the ARB.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing.

Joseph Crawford stated that he was the owner of 224 South Street. He explained that this house was vacant and boarded up when he purchased it, with holes in the metal roof and crumbling chimneys. He said that these features were damaging the house and posed a safety issue, and he could provide additional photos for reference. He emphasized that he was never informed that this house was in a historic district. He stated that the cost of replacing the roof and the chimneys was estimated to be about \$25,000 and as a career firefighter in Henrico County, he did not have the means to pay for that additional expense.

Mr. Crawford stated that he understood the ARB's logic behind their decision and appreciated the extra time they had granted him, but he felt the repairs to the house had added value and quality to the neighborhood rather than detracted from it. He noted that there were multiple roofs with asphalt shingles in the neighborhood, and he was asking for grace to be given in his particular situation.

Barb Rudolph, 1675 Mount Vernon Street. She noted that metal roofs were very expensive, as was constructing two chimneys with traditional masonry. She agreed it was important to preserve historic architecture in this City, but it was financially prohibitive to do it. She said that there needed to be some balance, and in this case, she supported granting an exception to this homeowner.

Ajani Sekou, 27 South Sycamore Street, said that he would simply ask for equity and equality in the decision made by Council on this item. He understood that these repairs and replacements could be costly, but their City Ordinances needed to be applied equally across the board, unless they wanted to amend the Ordinance to accept the new with the old.

Vernell Gannaway, 652 Old Wagner Road, stated that he supported appealing the ARB decision in this case. He stated that the owner had clearly improved the house, which aligned with the revitalization efforts in the City.

Rhonda Sonnenberg, 557 High Street, said that she learned recently about this frequent problem of newcomers to the City being completely unaware of the requirements and guidelines for their historic districts. She suggested that every new owner of a historic building should be notified by the City of the guidelines when they purchase the property, so they could avoid wasting the time and money of all parties involved. She said that additionally, if they did not uphold their historic guidelines, they would lose the historic quality of the City.

Marlo Green, 301 Rolfe Street, stated that she agreed with Mr. Sekou that it would be unfair to reverse the decision of the ARB in this case. She said they must ensure they were being fair in their process and rely on the expertise of the ARB.

Celeste Revish, member of the Architectural Review Board, stated that the ARB's duty was to support the City of Petersburg as a historical City. She said that if they got into the habit of allowing commercial owners to avoid the state and federal guidelines, it would become a problem.

Paula Chester, 1013 Oakmont Drive, agreed that they needed to stay consistent and stay within their guidelines. She suggested that staff share the historic property requirements and guidelines when they approved permits for work, and to let them know that if they cannot afford the work, they cannot honor the permits.

Joe Battiston, 1 South Sycamore Street, explained that the ARB's decisions were overseen by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, National Park Service, and Department of the Interior. If they allowed these types of actions to continue, they risked losing the historic districts, and in turn risked losing revenue for the City to rehabilitate these buildings due to historic building tax credits. He requested the Council to uphold the ARB decision so that they could ensure everyone was doing what was necessary. He agreed that they needed to develop a process for notifying homebuyers that the property was located in the historic district; however, the realtors' organizations lobbied against that at state and federal levels.

Mayor Parham closed the public hearing.

Council Member Jones agreed with both perspectives presented by the public comments on this issue. He did not support the actions of the homeowner, as they did have guidelines that needed to be upheld. However, they needed to find a way to make sure this information was given proactively to property owners so they did not create such an intense financial burden. He said that the City needed to be able to tell people before they started the work on historic houses, and they had not been doing a good job of that. He agreed that consistency was also important in these decisions.

Council Member Smith-Lee made a motion to uphold the decisions of the Architectural Review Board requiring the existing roof to be replaced to match the original and for the chimneys to be constructed.

Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

Council Member Cuthbert made a motion to direct the City Manager to explore the potential ability of the City to include the historic district property status within the chain of title, putting all future owners on notice and to provide contact information for the Department of Planning.

Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

- b. A Public Hearing for Consideration of an Ordinance Approving a Request by the City of Petersburg to Rezone Property at 300 Poplar Drive, Parcel ID 082020004 and 27 Seyler Drive, Parcel ID 088020003, from the R-1 Single Family Residence and R-4 Multiple Dwelling Districts to the MXD-3 Mixed-Use District in Accordance with Code of Virginia Section 15.2-2286 and Article 28 of the City of Petersburg Zoning Ordinance

Jared Crews, Interim Director of Planning and Community Development, provided a summary of the item. He stated that for background, in February 2026, City Council asked the Planning Commission to identify areas south of the ERC District between the Wagner and South Crater Corridors that may be appropriate for proactive rezoning.

Mr. Crews stated that the Planning Commission ultimately recommended 300 Poplar Drive and 27 Seyler Drive would be appropriate for rezoning consideration to MXD-3 Mixed Use District, based on Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map (FLUM) guidance. The existing uses would become legal non-conforming uses; the focus was on future redevelopment. On May 7, 2026, the Planning Commission held a public hearing and unanimously recommended approval of the request.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing.

Vernell Gannaway, 652 Old Wagner Road, stated that it was important to consider potential impacts on the neighboring residential properties. He said that he understood the intent was to allow appropriate commercial uses, but once it was rezoned, the City had little control over what would be placed there.

Steven Sykes, 133 St. Mark Street, said that he worked in this area and understood the needs of the area. He stated that they must ensure there was adequate access to services in these areas, and they must provide clear assurances to the residents that these actions would not drive-up costs more in this area. He suggested the City seek feedback from the neighbors to better understand what was needed here, and that should be done prior to making any decisions.

Mayor Parham closed the public hearing.

Council Member Cuthbert expressed support for the proactive rezoning. He said that it would eliminate any problematic zoning for future development in this area and would protect the surrounding neighborhoods in the process.

Council Member Cuthbert made a motion to approve the Ordinance approving a Request by the City of Petersburg to Rezone Property at 300 Poplar Drive, Parcel ID 082020004, and 27 Seyler Drive, Parcel ID 088020003, from the R-1 Single Family Residence and R-4 Multiple Dwelling Districts to the MXD-3

Mixed-Use District in Accordance with Code of Virginia Section 15.2-2286 and Article 28 of the City of Petersburg Zoning Ordinance.

Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

- c. A Public Hearing for Consideration of an Ordinance Approving a Request by Erin Schaefer to Rezone Property at 608 Hinton Street, Parcel ID 02310006 from the M-1 Light Industrial District to the R-3 Two-Family Residence District

Jared Crews, Interim Director of Planning and Community Development, provided a summary of the item. He stated that the applicant was seeking to rezone 608 Hilton Street from M-1 Light Industrial District to the R-3 Two-Family Residence District. The intent was to keep the existing duplex on the property and renovation of the structure. He noted that there was a variety of zoning along Hinton Street, but the surrounding properties were almost exclusively residential. The current duplex was legally nonconforming, and if the request was approved, it would become a legally conforming use which allowed for renovation and expansion of the building. On May 7, 2026, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the request.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing.

Paula Chester, 1013 Oakmont Drive, asked if the homes on this property would be affordable for those with low incomes.

Mayor Parham closed the public hearing.

Mr. Crews stated that he did not believe the applicant intended to put income restrictions on the property. He said that he would assume the home to be marketed at a comparative price to the other houses in this neighborhood and corridor.

Council Member Jones asked how the home was built if residential uses were not allowed in an industrial zoning district.

Mr. Crews said that the house that was there probably was built before the zoning map was put in place. He said that at one point, the City did allow for single-family dwellings and two-family dwellings to be built in the industrial districts. He stated that the applicant was intending to make improvements to the house, but that required making it a legally conforming use.

Council Member Jones asked if staff discussed affordability with applicants such as in this case.

Mr. Crews replied that they usually did for new construction, but they could not mandate conditions in cases such as this. He said that from his perspective, the house was sitting vacant, so this request would be an improvement.

Council Member Jones expressed concern that the housing may be unaffordable. He requested that staff ask those important questions of applicants.

Council Member Myers stated that this was not a question of affordability; the applicant was asking for this property to be rezoned to residential. He noted that when looking on the map, it was clear this and one other property were the only ones in the neighborhood that were not zoned residential.

Council Member Myers made a motion to approve the Ordinance Approving a Request by Erin Schaefer to Rezone Property at 608 Hinton Street, Parcel ID 02310006 from the M-1 Light Industrial District to the R-3 Two-Family Residence District.

Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

- d. A Public Hearing for Consideration of an Ordinance Approving a Request by Bernard Harper, on Behalf of Club 17 Charitable Foundation Inc., to Rezone with Proffers Property at 507 South Adams Street, Parcel ID 03113001 from the R-3 Two-Family Residence District to the B-2 General Commercial District

Jared Crews, Interim Director of Planning and Community Development, provided a summary of the item. He stated that the subject property was a 0.18-acre property located in the R-3 Two Family Residence District, located adjacent to the existing Club 17 and within the City's Urban Enterprise Zone. The existing 1,700 square-foot structure was formerly a single-family dwelling, and the subject parcel was recently consolidated with the neighboring vacant lot.

Mr. Crews explained that the rezoning request would rezone the property from R-3, Two-Family Residence District to B-2, General Commercial District to expand Club 17 operations. If approved, the former dwelling would be converted into a non-profit headquarters and private club/event center space, and the undeveloped portion of the site would function as an additional parking area. There were nine proffers provided for consideration to limit the use and specify restrictions.

Mr. Crews noted that the surrounding zoning was entirely residential with the exception of the existing Club 17 property, which was zoned Commercial. He reviewed Comprehensive Plan considerations, which included the Historic Core Neighborhood designation in the Future Land Use Map, and the nearby Neighborhood Commercial Area.

Mr. Crews stated that a number of concerns were raised by the Planning Commission, including parking and traffic, noise, overall site layout, and hours of operation; however, conditions were intended to address all of these factors and the applicant provided additional responses to provide clarity and assurance. He summarized that on May 7, 2026, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the request as presented in a 7-1 vote.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing.

Donald Roney, President of Club 17, stated that Club 17 had been around for 75 years and had supported many youth groups and families in that time. He requested that City Council approve the rezoning request so they could continue their work in the City.

Bernard Harper, 33 Denise Road, stated that he grew up only a block away from Club 17 and considered himself a proud product of the investment Club 17 Charitable Foundation made in young people in this community. He attested to the positive role models in the organization and scholarships they provided,

which personally changed the trajectory of his life. He stated that he had served as the manager of their scholarship foundation for the past 20 years and over \$250,000 in scholarships had been awarded to their youth, who went on to become successful, vital professionals.

Mr. Harper stated that the proposal for the headquarters and cultural center at 507 South Adams Street would allow them to continue that work and preserve and improve an important neighborhood property in Ward 4. He assured Council that they had carefully listened to the concerns raised and made meaningful steps to address them. He noted the strong support for the organization and respectfully requested the Council's approval of this rezoning request with proffers to allow Club 17 to serve Petersburg for the next 75 years.

Carol Harris expressed her strong support for the request. She stated that the organization provided and supported valuable programs for local youth, offering a safe and supportive environment that promoted leadership, teamwork, personal growth, and positive community involvement. She stated that approving this rezoning request would allow Club 17 to expand their positive impact. She said she could personally attest to the help they had given to their local youth football programs, so she encouraged City Council to approve the request.

Patricia Hines, 1227 Hamilton Street, said that she represented multiple community organizations, namely the NAACP and the Petersburg Center for Development. She expressed support for the request from Club 17, as they were a wonderful community partner. They helped with fundraisers and event partnerships, and they provided many opportunities for the community to gather at their building. She requested that Council support the request.

Serena Miles, 201 Cottonwood Drive, expressed support for the request. She said that Club 17 had hosted Christmas drives, back-to-school drives, monthly community events with dinners and door prizes, and maintained a community garden.

Vernell Gan26444naway, 652 Old Wagner Road, expressed support for the request. He said that his family had utilized Club 17 throughout the years and they had always been outstanding and dependable.

Constance Green, 3364 Seton Road, said that her father was one of the founding members of Club 17, and she had supported them completely for their 75 years of service to the community. She stated that they never faltered and continued to serve, and she would continue to support them.

Patty Hertz, 1733 South Sycamore Street, expressed support for Club 17. She stated that they were an exemplary organization and were well-known as such in the community. She said that they were involved in numerous activities and events in the community, and they had exemplary leadership. She requested Council to approve their request.

Mayor Parham closed the public hearing.

Council Member Smith-Lee noted that she had received one of the scholarships from Club 17 when she was in high school. She emphasized that Mr. Harper was a remarkable example of how young people can persevere and succeed in life and give back to the community. She thanked Club 17 for their important role and service to the City.

Council Member Cuthbert stated that he wanted to bring Council's attention the unsolved murder of a young man who was shot outside of Club 17. He also wanted to review the numerous police calls for service to Club 17, most of which were noise complaints, and two complaints about gunshots fired. He noted that neighbors of Club 17 had provided comments that recommended denial of the request due to concerns about intensification of the Club's activities, which they stated were already disruptive and

undermined the quietude and stability of the nearby homes. He also noted there was a permit denied for Club 17 on December 17, 2025. He asked if Mr. Harper could provide context on why the permit was rejected.

Mr. Harper clarified that the permit was rejected due to a misunderstanding of the building design. He stated that after it was rejected, they met with the inspectors and their architect in Club 17 to explain what they were doing with the building. He said that there were additional notes attached to that document, which provided context on why they were requesting the rezoning this evening.

Council Member Cuthbert asked if the building needed sprinklers.

Mr. Harper replied that the fire marshal would determine that after the rezoning was approved and they applied again for the permit.

Council Member Cuthbert asked if it was unfair to hold Club 17 responsible for the behavior of those who rented from Club 17.

Mayor Parham called a point of order. He stated that the matter before Council was regarding an Ordinance to approve a rezoning with proffers on this property.

Mr. Harper answered Council Member Cuthbert's question; he stated that he believed they continued to be held responsible by the City. He noted that everyone who rented the Club 17 facility had to receive event licenses from the Petersburg Police Department in order to hold their events there. He also noted that after the young man was shot outside of Club 17, they made changes to operations at their building to prevent anything similar from happening in the future, such as limiting nighttime hours and prevention of loitering in the parking lot.

Council Member Myers made a motion to approve the Ordinance Approving a Request by Bernard Harper, on Behalf of Club 17 Charitable Foundation Inc., to Rezone with Proffers Property at 507 South Adams Street, Parcel ID 03113001 from the R-3 Two-Family Residence District to the B-2 General Commercial District.

Council Member Westbrook seconded the motion.

Council Member Jones stated that gun violence had occurred all throughout their City, and it was not something that was only Club 17's responsibility. He said that it was a matter of ignorance, and the City and all citizens must own that. He encouraged everyone to join together and create opportunities for positive community engagement, and avoid creating more division and ignorance.

Mayor Parham called the vote on approval of the Ordinance.

The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

- e. A Public Hearing and Second Reading to Approve the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds for Program Year 2026 - 2027 and Fiscal year 2027 as Recommended by the CDBG Advisory Board

Jennifer James, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Advisory Board, reviewed the recommendations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2027. She stated that they were awarded \$586,394 for CDBG this year, and the Advisory Board recommended project:Homes to receive \$115,000 for housing

rehabilitation, The McKenney Foundation to receive \$250,000 for rehabilitation and historic preservation, Rebuilding Together Richmond to receive \$115,000 for housing rehabilitation, and CDBG Administration to receive \$106,394 for community planning and development. She explained that they also had \$201,548.90 in carryover funds, which were recommended to be split evenly among River Street education for economic development and micro-enterprise programs, Lending Helping Hands for their homelessness program, and ThisAbility for their self-sufficiency program.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing.

Barb Rudolph, 1675 Mount Vernon Street, asked about the McKenney Foundation project. She said that it was a worthwhile project, but the total cost was around \$6 million, so she was unsure if \$250,000 was appropriate for that project. She said that considering the many other immediate needs of the community, she thought those funds may be better utilized.

Wayne Crocker stated that the \$250,000 and other funding the McKenney Foundation had secured would be used to preserve the building and keep it watertight; it had been leaking since the library left. He stated that a few years ago, they received funding to replace the roof of the original part of the building and this CDBG funding would be used to preserve the building and prepare it for future renovation.

Mayor Parham closed the public hearing.

Council Member Jones made a motion to amend the current Community Development Block Grant FY 2627 subrecipient funding. He proposed reallocating the year two CDBG allocation from Rebuilding Together Richmond in the amount of \$115,000 and instead allocating those funds to River Street Education for Economic Development and Micro-enterprise. He also proposed reallocating the carryover funds for homelessness-related services from the subrecipient Lending Helping Hands in the amount of \$67,182.90 and instead allocating those funds to the City of Petersburg Department of Social Services for the purpose of administering homelessness prevention and responsive services.

Council Member Jones said that this motion represented a standard, fiscally responsible balancing of federal CDBG resources to maximize local efficiency. He said that their housing safety net remained fully intact, anchored by their ongoing partnership in housing rehabilitation, allowing them to pivot these specific microenterprise resources to River Street Education to boost local economic growth and food access. He said that furthermore, reallocating these homelessness-related carryover funds directly to the Petersburg Department of Social Services allowed the city to centralize their emergency housing intake by placing these funds within the Department of Social Services. He said that they could seamlessly bundle all of them with the existing municipal assistance programs, creating a unified one-stop shop that accelerated response times for residents facing a housing crisis.

Council Member Myers seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

f. A Public Hearing for Consideration of an Amendment to the FY26 General Fund and the FY26 Grants Fund

Garry Cozier, Budget Manager, gave a brief summary of the item. He stated that the request before Council tonight was an amendment to the FY26 General Fund and the FY26 Grants Fund. He explained that for the General Fund, the amount of amendment was \$1,182,840, which resulted from the

unbudgeted first installment of casino gaming tax revenue. He said that for the Grants Fund, the fund was proposed to be amended by \$40,000 because they had a new grant from Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) for Project Safe Neighborhoods for the Police Department.

Mayor Parham opened the public hearing.

Barb Rudolph, 1675 Mount Vernon Street, stated that she would like clarification on the almost \$1.2 million in casino revenues. She recalled they talked about that during the budget meeting and how people wanted to know about that, but now it was being treated as a backdoor matter. She stated that it was a lot of money, so she would like to know what it was being budgeted for.

Ajani Sekou, 27 South Sycamore Street, stated that there needed to be transparency with regard to these amendments. He stated that it was a significant amount of money, so it should be specified what it was going to be used for in the budget. He stated that otherwise, the unallocated funds could easily be corrupted.

Vernell Gannaway, 652 Old Wagner Road, stated that it was important to carefully track all of the casino money. He wanted to see more involvement in the budget process and more citizen input about how to use all the funds.

Mr. Cozier said that he could offer some clarification. He explained that this funding was for the current year's FY26 Budget, which would be ending in two weeks. He explained that when they adopted the budget for FY26, they did not include any casino gaming tax revenues because the casino was not opened at the time and they were unsure of when the revenues would come in. He said that the money had to go into the General Fund balance, and a formal request for it to be used for a specific purpose would require approval from Council. He clarified that this money was not part of the FY27 budgeted funds for casino gaming tax revenue, which was a part of the budget.

Mayor Parham closed the public hearing.

Council Member Cuthbert stated that this was an example of hiding money from City Council. He stated that during the development of the FY 27 Budget this year, he was told they could only afford a \$0.05 real estate tax reduction, and this money could have gotten them closer to a \$0.09 reduction. He said that this money had appeared out of nowhere.

Mayor Parham called a point of order. He asked if City Manager Altman could provide some more information on this item.

March Altman, City Manager, clarified that these were not funds for the upcoming budget; these were funds collected during the current budget year. These funds represented casino gaming funds that were collected by the state and distributed to the City for January and February of this year. He believed they received these funds in late May, and this item was amending the current year budget to put these in unallocated funds, which would then go into the fund balance when they closed out the year; there were only two weeks left in the year. They had to account for those funds that had come in during the current year, which was FY26. He said that next month, they would receive another monthly payment, and that may require amendment of the FY27 Budget based on timing. However, these funds coming in during the current FY26 year could not be allocated to the FY27 year.

Mayor Parham stated that the tax rate was lowered for the next budget year, not this current budget year. He said that this funding was separate from Council Member Cuthbert's point of concern regarding the next budget year.

Council Member Cuthbert stated that they could assume that the City would receive this same amount of revenues next year, so he did not understand why it would not be included in the FY27 budget.

Council Member Altman stated that it was a quarterly payment, but the state did not distribute it based on the quarter. He stated that they received the January and February revenues in May, and they had not received another quarterly payment yet. He said that the revenues also fluctuated based on activity at the casino.

Council Member Cuthbert asked if it was fair to say that the City would receive at least \$3 million in casino revenues from the same source of the \$1.182 million in the upcoming fiscal year.

City Manager Altman replied that he hoped they would receive at least that amount.

Council Member Cuthbert stated that they were taxing the citizens of Petersburg unduly.

Mayor Parham called a point of order. He stated that this item was for an amendment to the FY26 General Fund and FY26 Grants Fund. He asked for a motion on consideration of the amendment.

Council Member Myers made a motion to approve the Amendment to the FY26 General Fund and the FY26 Grants Fund.

Council Member Smith-Lee seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

g. A Public Hearing for Consideration of an Ordinance Amending Section 106-112 of the City Code Relating to Real Estate Tax Relief for the Elderly and Permanently Disabled Persons

Brittany Flowers, Master Commissioner of the Revenue, gave a brief summary of the item. She explained that when this item was previously approved, she had made a typographical error in the Code language where it referenced \$35,001.00 instead of \$30,001.00 in the income limits. She stated that before she mailed out any letters for tax relief approval, she wanted to ensure this was corrected and their language was accurate. She requested Council to approve the amendment.

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

Council Member Westbrook made a motion to approve the Ordinance Amending Section 106-112 of the City Code Relating to Real Estate Tax Relief for the Elderly and Permanently Disabled Persons.

Council Member Smith-Lee seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

h. A Public Hearing for Consideration of an Amendment to Section 2-422 and to Add Section 2-442.1 of the City Code Increasing Contracting Limits for Professional Services and Job Order Contracts

March Altman, City Manager, gave a brief overview of the item. He explained that the proposed Ordinance would amend Section 2-422 and add section 2-422.1. He explained that their current contract limits were less than what was permitted by state law, and this amendment would align their limits to the Virginia Procurement Act for consistency and allow for faster construction on City projects. For those reasons, staff requested Council's approval to increase the limits for professional services and job order contracting.

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

Council Member Smith-Lee made a motion to approve the Amendment to Section 2-422 and to Add Section 2-442.1 of the City Code Increasing Contracting Limits for Professional Services and Job Order Contracts.

Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

9. PUBLIC INFORMATION PERIOD

Wendy Austin, a resident of High Street, Ward 5, said that she was there to follow up on the FY27 Budget for future consideration, specifically regarding her concern that public works was receiving the smallest allocation of the budget, even though most issues that concerned residents were related to public works needs, including Facilities, Grounds, and Street maintenance. She said that City Manager Altman had explained that the public works budget allocation was for operations like staff salaries and administration, and that there were also millions of dollars in grants and other funds available for projects. She said that she contended, however, that less money for public works operations limited staff size and department capacity. She said that combining that with ongoing key staff vacancies, it was nearly impossible to ensure all of those millions of funds and grants could be used. She said that as diligent as the current staff was working and as many projects were underway, there were important projects and millions of dollars that were not moving forward in their City and greater region. She reiterated that moving these projects along required qualified City staff to coordinate with funding agencies.

Ms. Austin suggested that the \$1.2 million to the turf division under the Golf Course Enterprise Fund should be directed to Public Works to strengthen the Department's capacity. She said that regarding the non-departmental outside agency category and Council Member Jones's question regarding the \$100,000 budgeted for the private nonprofit Battersea Foundation, she agreed it was very hard to clearly assess the investment and value of the City and its residents. She said that to improve clarity, she suggested reorganizing that category to separate nonprofits such as Petersburg Symphony, Friends Of the Lower Appomattox River (FOLAR), OCR, and Battersea into separate community nonprofits from the contracted government agencies such as District 19 and Riverside Regional Jail. She also recommended creating a citizen committee to review the community organizations and provide budget recommendations to the City.

Ajani Sekou, 27 South Sycamore Street, thanked the Mayor and Police Chief Christian for helping him get the Art the Block Festival ready to go. However, it was unfortunate that he had to struggle so much to get to this point. He stated that he understood the vision of City Council and was ready to work with them, but he saw funds being directed toward such a small portion of their big, beautiful City. He stated that standard operating procedures were not followed with regard to review of his planned event, and the uncertainty and lack of support from the City left him feeling disenfranchised and discriminated against. He also asked

Council to critically analyze how the City was being marketed; it was being gentrified and white-washed. He reiterated his thanks to the City for their help and he looked forward to putting on a spectacular event.

Barb Rudolph, 1675 Mount Vernon Street, recalled that during their budget meetings this year, Council Member Cuthbert had asked some questions and some of his colleagues were perturbed. She said that from her perspective, she thought his questions were on target. She agreed with him that there needed to be further transparency in the budget. She stated that when Council had their two-on-two meetings with staff, the public did not get to learn about what the Council Members' priorities were for the budget that year. She said that the priorities were eventually presented to the public, but the reasoning behind them was not clearly given, and detail was seriously lacking. She also thought those meetings may not be the most efficient or organized way of developing the budget. She requested more transparency from Council on the budget development process in the future, particularly with regard to their casino revenues.

Tracey Hardney Scott, Executive Director of the Tenant Landlord Resource Center, stated that their office will be located at 325 Brown Street when it opens. She stated that she started the Tenant Landlord Resource Center in 2017 to educate, advocate, and empower both tenants and landlords by providing resources, training, mediation, and guidance in housing rights and responsibilities. She said that she had 45 years of experience in this field, with certification for maintenance tech, building code, uniform standards of physical occupancy, and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Ms. Scott stated that in addition to serving as the founder, she was also the Virginia State Conference Housing Chair of the NAACP, as well as the City of Richmond NAACP, and founder of the Black Leadership Council. She said that their resource center did not provide legal services, but they did have legal counsel at their disposal. She stated that their office would be established physically in Petersburg, and she had already had the opportunity to assist and advocate for residents facing housing issues in Petersburg East, Liberty Point, and Carriage House Apartments. She emphasized the importance of having a community-based resource dedicated to helping residents navigate housing challenges while also working collaboratively with property owners, local government, and community.

Vernell Gannaway, 652 Old Wagner Road, thanked Chief Miller for coming through, as well as Council Member Jones for working to make sure the issue with the stormwater drains was fixed. He said that the work was not done, but he was greatly appreciative of all that had been done so far. He agreed with Ms. Rudolph that transparency was crucial. He stated that he believed they could benefit from coming together as a community and that was when the City would truly thrive.

Marlo Green, 301 Rolfe Street, stated that she was here tonight as a resident of Pocahontas Island and president and founder of the OCR Community Empowerment Group. She requested coordination between VDOT and the City when making improvements to the Pocahontas Island trail. She stated that if VDOT funding was already planned, then OCR can direct their funding toward other documented unmet needs on Pocahontas Island. She requested the City to take the necessary steps to ensure work was not duplicated, that appropriate standards for the trails were met, for public review of the design plans before commencing work, and to clarify how this trail would connect to the larger trail, parking, and access improvements already planned.

Ms. Green announced some upcoming events on Pocahontas Island. She stated that OCR would be hosting a Juneteenth event from 9:00 a.m. from 10:30 a.m. for invasive species removal and trail cleanup. She requested Council Member Cuthbert to please attend one of their parks and green space meetings, as many community members had asked for him to be part of their discussions. She stated that the meeting was on July 8 from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Emmanuel Worship Center.

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

Council Member Cuthbert asked if the City Manager could bring them up to date on when he would present a plan for collecting the \$25 million in past due taxes owed to the City. He said that he was referring to real estate, personal property, and utilities.

City Manager Altman replied that staff would be presenting that information in July of this year.

Council Member Cuthbert noted that there was one parcel being sold to pay for past due real estate taxes, which was a positive development. He asked if there was an update on moving the stormwater charges from the utility bill to the real estate bill.

City Manager Altman stated that staff was still investigating their potential options. He said that other localities had experienced difficulties with third-party billers had difficulty making sure they were correct, so with that in mind they were developing the best path forward and would present that to Council.

Anthony Williams, City Attorney, explained that he had prepared the ordinance for staff. He said that in addition to ensuring the third-party vendor could complete the task, the preeminent issue with this method was that not all stormwater customers were property owners. He said that they would have to maintain an entirely separate system for tracking customers who were not property owners. He said that the existing ordinance contemplated that a billing schedule was based on the combined water, sewer, and solid waste bills, so changing it would require additional effort. He said that furthermore, adding this fee to real property tax bills may exacerbate their existing difficulties with collections.

Council Member Cuthbert stated that they needed to find a way to make it work.

Council Member Jones made a motion. He moved that Council direct the City Attorney to pursue all available legal remedies regarding the public safety conditions at Petersburg East Apartments / Croatan Apartments (110 Croatan Drive), including nuisance abatement and court-ordered safety measures; and to direct the Petersburg Police Department to fully enforce the existing citywide curfew ordinance for minors — which prohibits anyone under 18 from being in public places between 10:00 PM and 6:00 AM — and that the City Attorney explore all available legal options for strengthening parental accountability under the curfew.

Council Member Westbrook seconded the motion.

City Attorney Williams clarified that the motion made by Council Member Jones was not requesting to shut down the apartment or have the residents removed from the premises; he was requesting the owner to strengthen security measures.

Council Member Jones confirmed that was correct. He stated that his request was to direct staff to look into all legal options for the owner and management to protect the residents.

The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

Council Member Jones made a motion to direct the City Manager to conduct a pay parity analysis for all department heads, comparing compensation by race and ethnicity, and report back to Council within 60 days with any identified disparities and recommendations for equitable adjustments. Council Member Westbrook seconded the motion.

Council Member Jones stated that considering the longstanding and deeply ingrained history of unjust operations in the City, he was asking for research to be completed to assure they were operating fairly going forward. He expressed concern that their Black department heads were not receiving the same salary as their white department heads. He stated that he was committed to solving this issue because it was essential for equitable and responsible use of taxpayer funds, and it was important that the City move away from their past practices that were rooted in inequality and prejudice. He emphasized that a study was necessary for clarity and to fix this issue for the future of the City.

Council Member Cuthbert called a point of order. He asked if Council's rules addressed bringing motions without advance notice.

City Attorney Williams confirmed that they did, and generally it was not allowed to bring motions forward without advance notice. He said that this motion was not an executive action; it was directing the City Manager to do research.

Council Member Jones made a motion to suspend the rules of Council to take action on the motion.

Council Member Myers seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

Council Member Jones said that his heart went out to the family of the young man who was killed at the Croatan Drive apartments.

Council Member Jones made a motion to direct the City Manager to conduct a pay parity analysis for all department heads, comparing compensation by race and ethnicity, and report back to Council within 60 days with any identified disparities and recommendations for equitable adjustments. Council Member Westbrook seconded the motion.

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

Council Member Westbrook reflected on his recent trip to Rwanda, which was a deeply inspirational and motivational experience. He stated that the country experienced one of the darkest periods in human history with the Rwandan Genocide, which was at its worst in 1994. He stated that today, Rwanda was marked by a commitment to unity, peace, and collective progress. He witnessed that community engagement was an expectation and everyone was actively involved in rebuilding their country with a shared vision for the future. He said that this made him consider how they could move forward in Petersburg and dissolve the self-made divisions in their community.

Council Member Westbrook stated that this extended to Ward lines as well; they must work together and focus on the collective good of Petersburg. He noted that Rwanda was leading in responsible environmental stewardship, and Petersburg had the opportunity to move in that same direction. He stated that over the next few months, he would continue educating the community on reducing single-use plastics and position the City as a leader in environmental sustainability in the Commonwealth.

Council Member Westbrook also spoke about the ongoing violence in the City. He emphasized that they must adopt a mindset of zero tolerance when it came to violence. He stated that everyone in Petersburg must uplift what was right and make clear that success, discipline, and unity were the standards. He stated

that in addition to the national problem of gun control, there was a reconciliation and forgiveness problem as well. He said that conflict should be resolved without escalation or bitterness. He stated that he was amazed by the culture of forgiveness and peace in Rwanda that resulted after the genocide.

Council Member Westbrook stated that Petersburg had produced greatness, including the NBA star Moses Malone. However, they did not do enough to honor his legacy in Petersburg, and he would like to change that. He stated that he would follow up with more on this topic, hopefully to install a historic marker or other recognition for Mr. Malone. He said that he also wanted to celebrate the City's men in honor of Father's Day and Men's Health Month in June. He thanked the City's men for being positive role models and productive members of the community.

Council Member Myers thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting. He thanked their Clerk of Council, Tangi Hill, for helping organize their grocery giveaway program, which they would announce at the next Council meeting. He stated that they also had their housing stability program moving forward, and they were waiting to hear back from the state on their next steps. He announced that on July 9, they would be hosting a pop-up event with the school system and their McKinney-Vento program for families currently living in hotels.

Council Member Smith-Lee expressed her gratitude to Ms. Marlo Green for all her work and encouraged her to keep pressing on. She stated that vacation bible school would be held at Gillfield Baptist Church from July 7 through July 9, and she encouraged all youth to join. She thanked Chief Miller for allowing 125 youth in the City to be employed in their City departments, teaching job skills and responsibilities. She thanked Pat Hines for an outstanding event held this past weekend. She asked the public to please give Council some grace as they continued their work to sustain and improve the City. She thanked everyone for their support.

Mayor Parham stated that Petersburg High recently had their graduation ceremony, which was a beautiful event to be part of. He said that over \$1 million in scholarships were awarded to their graduates, which was very impressive. He stated that there was a mural unveiling on Friday, which he could not attend because he was being recognized at the 100 Men of Color Awards Gala. He stated that it was an honor to represent Petersburg there along with Josh Cuba, JaJa Parham, Vincent Tucker, and Tony Tucker. He said that there was a lot of discussion about the impressive progress being made in Petersburg, and it was great to be part of the revival of such a great City.

Mayor Parham thanked the Petersburg Police for their involvement in the West Park Community Walk yesterday, where they passed out information on Gun Safety Awareness Month. He encouraged the public to utilize the resources available from the Police Department, including gun safes to ensure firearms were safely stored. He wished all fathers a Happy Father's Day. He reported that over 300 kids applied for the City's summer internship program, which was phenomenal.

Mayor Parham announced that this Friday at 4:00 p.m. was the Petersburg Juneteenth Concert at the Civic Center, and he hoped to see everyone there. Additionally, the Seventh Day Adventist Church on South Boulevard was having a Juneteenth Fair at 12:00 p.m. He announced that Council Member Jones was also hosting the Father's Day Gospel Concert at Christian Tabernacle Church on this Friday.

11. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

There were no items under this portion of the agenda.

12. FINANCE AND BUDGET REPORT

a. Department of Finance Monthly Update

Garry Cozier, Budget Manager, reported that this would be the second-to-last update for this fiscal year. He stated that the report include their budget-to-actuals through the end of May. He said that with 92% of the year gone, they were at 84% of spend. The rest of their funds were generally in line, and there were no issues to report. He stated that the final report for the FY26 budget would be presented in July.

13. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There were no items under this portion of the agenda.

14. NEW BUSINESS

- b. A Resolution Appointing Richard Taylor to the Friends of the Lower Appomattox River "FOLAR" Board to Serve an Unexpired Indefinite Term

Council Member Cuthbert made a motion to approve the Resolution Appointing Richard Taylor to FOLAR Board to Serve an Unexpired Indefinite Term.

Council Member Westbrook seconded the motion.

Council Member Jones asked if Mr. Taylor was willing to serve an indefinite term.

Richard Taylor confirmed that he was.

The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

- c. Council Member Myers made a motion to approve the Resolution Appointing Babette Hammond to Serve a 3 Year Term on the Brightpoint Community College Board of Directors Beginning July 1, 2026, until June 30, 2028.

Council Member Smith-Lee seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

- d. A Resolution Appointing John M. "March" Altman, as Primary Member, to Serve an Indefinite Term Beginning July 1, 2026, and Police Chief Travis Christian, as Alternate Member, with a Term Ending June 30, 2030, to the Riverside Regional Jail Authority Board

Council Member Myers made a motion to approve the Resolution Appointing John M. "March" Altman, as Primary Member, to Serve an Indefinite Term Beginning July 1, 2026, and Police Chief Travis Christian, as Alternate Member, with a Term Ending June 30, 2030, to the Riverside Regional Jail Authority Board.

Council Member Smith-Lee seconded the motion.

Council Member Jones asked if the City Manager was willing to take on this indefinite term.

City Manager Altman confirmed that he was up to the task. He noted that the bylaws of the Jail Authority Board stipulated that the City Manager and the Sheriff were automatically appointed.

The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

- e. A Resolution Appointing Members to the Gateway Justice Services Community Criminal Justice Board as a Result of Name Change From the Petersburg/Dinwiddie Community Criminal Justice Board

Council Member Smith-Lee made a motion to approve the Resolution Appointing Members to the Gateway Justice Services Community Criminal Justice Board as a Result of Name Change From the Petersburg/Dinwiddie Community Criminal Justice Board.

Council Member Jones seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

- a. A Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute Development Agreements Between the City of Petersburg and Acuna Properties, LLC for the Development of 436 Byrne Street, Anthony Jackson for the Development of 724 Harding Street, and Stepping Stones Properties, LLC for the Development of 10 N. Foley Street and 340 Mistletoe Street Located in Petersburg, VA

Jeff Stokes, Deputy City Manager, provided a brief summary of the item. He stated that four properties were included in the Resolution for approval this evening: 436 Byrne Street, 724 Harding Street, 10 North Foley Street, and 340 Mistletoe Street. He reviewed the purchase prices and effective dates of the agreements.

Council Member Westbrook made a motion to approve the Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute Development Agreements Between the City of Petersburg and Acuna Properties, LLC for the Development of 436 Byrne Street, Anthony Jackson for the Development of 724 Harding Street, and Stepping Stones Properties, LLC for the Development of 10 N. Foley Street and 340 Mistletoe Street Located in Petersburg, VA.

Council Member Myers seconded the motion.

There was no discussion on the motion. The motion was approved on a roll call vote.

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

Council Member Jones encouraged citizens to purchase these affordable properties from the City so they could develop the City without gentrification.

15. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT AND SPECIAL REPORTS

March Altman, City Manager, wished all fathers a Happy Father's Day. He hoped everyone would have a wonderful weekend.

16. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM THE CLERK

Tangi Hill, Clerk of Council, stated that they had already mentioned the Father's Day Gospel Concert, and she wanted to announce that the Brooklyn All-Stars, as well as the Sensational Nightingales, would be the featuring acts. This would be a free concert on Friday, June 19 at Christian Tabernacle Church, beginning at 6:00 p.m. She said that there was information available on the table in the back regarding the Police Department's several activities taking place. She said that on June 25 at 6:00 p.m., there would be a summer family movie night series, with additional dates to follow.

Ms. Hill said that they had already opening registration for National Night Out, which was taking place on Tuesday, August 4, 2026. She said that registration had also begun for their Citizens Police Academy, which would begin on September 2 through November 4. She encouraged everyone to make sure to stop by the back table and get all of that great information about things happening in the City of Petersburg from their finest.

Mayor Parham added that Council Member Jones would be singing with the Brooklyn All-Stars at the gospel concert.

17. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM THE CITY ATTORNEY

Anthony Williams, City Attorney, stated that he had no report this evening.

18. ADJOURNMENT

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

The City Council adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Adopted: 07/07/2026



Mayor, Samuel Parham

ATTEST:



Clerk of Council, Tangi R. Hill