

The regular meeting of the Petersburg City Council was held on Tuesday, February 18, 2020, at the Union Train Station. Mayor Parham called the meeting to order at 6:43p.m.

1. ROLL CALL:

Present:

Council Member Charles H. Cuthbert, Jr.
Council Member Annette Smith-Lee
Council Member Treska Wilson-Smith
Council Member W. Howard Myers
Council Member Darrin Hill
Mayor Samuel Parham

Absent: Vice Mayor John A. Hart, Sr

Present from City Administration:

City Manager Aretha R. Ferrell-Benavides
City Attorney Anthony C. Williams
Clerk of Council Nykesha D. Jackson

2. PRAYER:

Mayor Parham stated, "Councilman Hill will lead us in our opening prayer."

Council Member Hill led the council meeting in prayer.

3. CLOSED SESSION:

*No items for a closed session.

4. MOMENT OF SILENCE:

Council Member Myers led the meeting into the moment of silence.

5. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Council Member Myers led council and the citizens in the pledge of allegiance.

6. DETERMINATION OF THE PRESENCE OF A QUORUM:

A quorum was determined with the presence of all City Council Members except for Vice Mayor Hart.

Mayor Parham stated, "Tonight, I'd like to make two announcements for our Positive Petersburg. First, the City will be hosting our annual Black History Month Festival THIS Saturday, February 22nd from 1-5pm at Petersburg High School. The festival will feature dance performances, food vendors, live music and much more! I'd also like to announce that the City is hosting a job fair on Saturday February 29th at Petersburg Area Transit (100 W Washington St) from 10am-2pm. Business casual attire is recommended and there will be on the spot interviews. Open positions include, but are not limited to: Administrative assistant, HR specialist, HVAC technician supervisor, Maintenance Worker, safety coordinator, and many more. There are flyers for the job fair located on the back table tonight. Please if you are interested come and if you are not give it to someone who needs a job."

*Audio available upon request.

7. PROCLAMATIONS/RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATION OF CEREMONIAL PROCLAMATIONS:

*No items for this portion of the agenda.

8. REPORTS/RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS PUBLIC INFORMATION PERIOD:

Folakemi Osoba, Public Information Period, read comments and responses from previous public information at the February 4, 2020, regular council meeting.

1. Citizens being permitted to bring firearms into Union Train Station during City Council meetings. Please refer to the Code of Virginia Section 15.2-915. And this is regarding the control of firearms applicable ability to authority and local government agencies.

India Adams-Jacobs, Assistant to the City Manager, gave follow-up responses to City Council from the February 4, 2020, council meeting.

1) There is a plaque at people's cemetery and needs to be fixed- Councilmember Hill

- a. Facilities Management is arranging for an estimate and timeline for repairs, we will provide an update once it's received.

2) What would be the cost of repairing the streetlights with LED lights and would it save the City on energy costs? – Mayor Parham

- a. The cost to replace the streets lights and convert them to LED should cost the city approximately \$503,581.36 as provided by an estimate received from Dominion VA Power. The conversion should save the City approximately \$127,645.80. The City is currently working with Dominion Virginia Power to develop a plan for replacement throughout the City we anticipate bringing this plan to the Council during the month of March.

9. COMMUNICATIONS/SPECIAL REPORTS:

- a. City Manager Report – Aretha R. Ferrell-Benavides, City Manager (Paper Handout)

Mrs. Benavides stated, "I gave a written report only."

- b. CAFR Presentation

- http://petersburgva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5105/3---CAFR_v2
- <http://petersburgva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5107/FY2017-18-CAFR-Findings>

Mrs. Benavides, David Myers, Patrice Elliott and David Foley gave a presentation on the CAFR with fiscal year ending June 30, 2018.

Council Member Cuthbert stated, "Mrs. Ferrell-Benavides that was a lot to review and my hat is off to you for doing it so well. I have got a couple of questions. At some point, City staff expect to receive unmodified opinions for business type activities and for the public utility fund for fiscal year ending June 30, 2018."

Mr. Myers stated, "Mr. Cuthbert, the reasons stated as Mr. Foley said for that modified opinion was because there was not an inventory done as of June 30, 2018. There isn't an inventory for June 30, 2019. So, that particular item should go away."

*Audio available upon request.

Council Member Cuthbert stated, "For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018, there is no way to remove the qualified opinion?"

Mr. Foley stated, "No, not for FY18. With that specific thing there just wasn't enough records. Unfortunately you cannot go back in time, so that issue that was noted it was not something specific with the City. Other things you can go back and recreate. But for that specific thing you cannot. That is why we have the qualified opinion. That is what it will be for 2018."

Council Member Cuthbert stated, "I understand. We just will have to live with it. But, I am sure that staff will learn from this experience. And that gets me to my next question. When is the CAFR due for the current fiscal year? Is it November 30th of this year?"

Ms. Elliott stated, "Yes, the CAFR is typically due November 30th."

Council Member Cuthbert stated, "Do you expect that the CAFR due on November 30th of this year for the fiscal year ending June 30th of this year will be filed on time without any qualified opinions?"

Ms. Elliott stated, "I will defer this to the City Manager."

Mrs. Benavides stated, "The CAFR ending for 19 is late. But the next one absolutely. One of the bid lessons learned is that we somehow cut out our preaudit team. Upon realizing that the preaudit team has always been part of the process. I am not sure why we didn't budget for it or what occurred. By the time we realized what was going on we brought VML-VaCo back to the table. And they are here on a contract to continue this process. So, that we will not get to this point ever again. What occurred is that staff felt that we can handle all of this in house. It just was not possible or feasible. And so, we are now under contract to have someone continuously pushing this project alone. So, by the time that they come on site we have done the things that we need to do to prepare for the audit. And so, I am hoping and I believe strongly that this will alleviate that issue. But part of it is making sure that we document that the previous audit staff is a major portion and a major function in our City and that we must maintain that relationship to continue this process."

Council Member Cuthbert stated, "My biggest concern is that we learn from our mistakes in the past which anyone can commit and I am not holding that against anyone. But, I do hope that we learn these lessons so that come November 30th of this year we will be filing our CAFR on time and that it will have unmodified opinions. And that seems to be a feasible goal to achieve. Would you agree?"

Mrs. Benavides stated, "I believe that it is a feasible goal. And I think that if we can focus on how to get some of the other task done. Part of this is to make sure that our accounts stay balanced and that we are staying up-to-date with are reconciliation and all of those functions. Then it is more than feasible. Our delays come when we are not paying attention. When we report back to you part of what we are going to have to do from a report standpoint is let you know where we are on closing each month. Because if we get to where we were on this last year and when we are trying to go back tracing it is not going to be successful. And I think that is part of where we got to stay diligent. We have to make sure that we don't find out at the final hour that none of the reconciliation has been done for the whole year."

Council Member Cuthbert stated, "That is great because this is so important to council's credibility with the public. It is important to the administration's credibility in Richmond and it is also important when it comes time to recalibrate our bond rating. So, for all those reasons I think council without exception will look to November 30th of this year and will cheer and hope to be achieved at that time. Thank you."

Council Member Myers stated, "City Manager, I am looking at page 212. And there were federal ward

*Audio available upon request.

questions and calls and findings in child nutrition cluster in 2016-2018. And it says that reimbursement of federal wards is determined by applying applicable number of meals served times reimbursement rates. And the school board was not entering the correct number of meals served each month when completing the monthly reimbursement unit report. But here it says that the school board was not complying with the grant report and was over reimbursement.”

Mr. Foley stated, “It says \$8,567.”

Council Member Myers stated, “Then I read it wrong. I no longer have a question. I read it wrong.”

Council Member Hill stated, “Not really a question but more of a statement. I just want to thank the team and everyone for working together. I know this was not easy. I am going to be honest with you all. I am a person about getting it right. I know that we have deadlines that we have to meet. And I know that we are behind the deadlines. But I am more about getting the documents right. Then to say that we just put some numbers down. The City Manager came and explained to use where you are and what have you. These numbers are right and of course we want them to be better. So, I think in the future I am excited about what the future holds for use. It is definitely a positive outlook for the way these numbers have been scrubbed in the different departments. And we have had a lot of transition also. Our future does look bright and there are some things which we can improve on. But let’s look for our next CAFR for being on time. But more importantly being right and we not putting in numbers to just be putting in numbers. Thank you.”

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, “Thank you that we have the document. I am looking at page 216 and there a couple of things here. Our biggest question is what are we going to do differently to make sure that 2019, these two statements do not occur anymore. The statements are that the City did not record \$849,000 of grant revenue and past due expenditures in its financial statements in accordance with the general accounting principles. And the second statement is that the City had comingled and misclassified a multitude of federal revenues with state and local revenues within the accounting system. What do we have in place to make that this does not happen again and that we are fixing that and it will be fixed?”

Mrs. Benavides stated, “That is the one that I spoke to specifically the workforce one. It actually never passed through the City. It draws down directly from the community college system through the learn and serve. And so, unfortunately the way that it was previously engaged in it, we have no idea how it was drawn down. Since, that time we have conducted a forensic audit of all our financials. We have assigned Ms. Tyus as oversight and in fact the executive director over the program is now an employee of the City. We have taken a more proactive approach in covering the unrecorded workforce development. What we will do with our finance and auditor is make sure that the amount of money is annually listed in or financials. And that is what was missing. So, generally for most of our funds that come from the state is transferred to the City which is drawn down by the treasurer office. And then it is paid out from the City to the vendor. Then in this case that the way that it is set up it never comes to the City. It goes directly to the vendor from the state. But we are still held accountable because our name is still listed as a subgrantee. So, we do not receive any documentation directly but what we are doing is going to request and make sure that Ms. Tyus gets that documentation on that particular.”

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, “So, does that satisfy the federal ward findings on 2011. Is it one in the same?”

Mrs. Benavides stated, “They are the same. That is just repeated because we still did not receive the documentation. Now we have the documentation because working with the state they required us to go through and do the audit. And have also pointed out that we must be engaged. Most of us look at the workforce and it is a regional organization. So, as the Mayor serves as the chair it represents multiple jurisdictions. However, when it was established we signed up to be the subgrantee as a named partner on it.

*Audio available upon request.

However, the oversight for it doesn't really go through the City until most recently. And over the past year we have been actively engaged because they now start to hold us accountable for expenditures."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "This is a lot of information. So, may I please reserve the right to come back and ask another hundred questions about it after I have reviewed it."

Mrs. Benavides stated, "Because our auditors are here today I wanted to make sure to address the high level conversation. Our advantage and the City's advantage is that we just received this today as well. E received a draft last week but I received it when you received it. And so, I received the finding information and we have responded to it. So, what we will do is give you at least a month to review this. It will be a month for us to go back and have a conversation with the auditors and talk about steps to address the council."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "Thank you."

Council Member Smith-Lee stated, "I just want to say thank you for this audit. Job well done. Also, thank you for explaining the types of opinions because a lot of people do not know. They think that unmodified is wrong but it is not. So, thank you for that."

Council Member Myers stated, "After my blunder earlier, I forgot to mention that I would like the Mayor and member of council to please give your City Manager a standing ovation and the team that she worked with to get us where we are today. Although, it may not be everything you need but we would like to congratulate you."

Mayor Parham stated, "I have one last question. We talked about an MOU to get a grasp on getting the accounts accurate and balanced on a monthly basis. How soon should we be looking for that MOU? Because I know that time is of essence."

Mrs. Benavides stated, "So, what I stated in that was that one of the things is that the treasurer had the conversation with staff. And part of that is reconciliation and reconciliation. As a function, and they have a lot of things on their plate, is an agreement with the City and treasurer's office agreeing that we will accurately perform the reconciliation. But assigning a staff person to assist with this process is very important for us. And I think that what we would work to is to sit down to come up with some type of agreement. I know that I am limited on what I can say because we did state that there is pending litigation that currently exist. But in the interim both the treasurer and I agreed on what we need to do to get this moving forward."

c. Utility Metering/ Billing and Collections Presentation

- <http://petersburgva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5109/Utility-Collections-Presentation-02182020>
- http://petersburgva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5110/Utilities_218

Janell Sinclair, Operations Manager, gave a brief PowerPoint on the Utility Metering.

There was discussion among City Council and staff.

Monte Evans, Director of Billing and Collections, gave a brief PowerPoint on Billing and Collections

There was discussion among City Council and staff.

10. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA (to include minutes of previous meeting/s)

a. Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of February 4, 2020

*Audio available upon request.

- b. A request to schedule a public hearing to consider an ordinance authorizing the sale of 1203 W. Washington Street.
- c. A request to schedule a public hearing to consider an ordinance authorizing the sale of 857 E. Bank Street.
- d. A request to schedule a public hearing for the Fiscal Year 2019-20 Operating Budget Amendment.

Council Member Myers made a motion to approve the consent agenda and to schedule the public hearings. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hill. The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Smith-Lee, Hill and Parham; Absent: Hart

11. OFFICIAL PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- a. A public hearing to amend the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-Pace) ordinance.

BACKGROUND: On July 2, 2019, City Council adopted an ordinance creating a Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) program and draft guidelines. City Council also chose to acquire a third-party administrator to administer the program. As a result, language in the original ordinance must be to allow for third-party administration and include the update eligible uses under the program.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the adoption of the ordinance as amended.

*http://petersburgva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/5106/CPACE-Amendment_ACJ-Presentation

India Adams-Jacobs, Assistant to City Manager, and Abby Johnson of Virginia PACE Authority, gave a briefing on C-PACE.

Mayor Parham opened the floor for public comments.

Seeing no hands, Mayor Parham closed the public comments.

Council Member Myers made a motion to adopt the ordinance. The motion was seconded by Council Member Wilson-Smith. The motion was approved on roll call. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Smith-Lee, Hill and Parham; Absent: Hart

20-ORD-8 AN ORDINANCE TO ADOPT CHAPTER 107 OF THE PETERSBURG CODE OF ORDINANCES ENTITLED "COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY FINANCING PROGRAM".

- b. A public hearing to consider an ordinance authorizing the sale of 1000 Diamond Street.

Mayor Parham stated, "The developer for 1000 Diamond Street as asked that the public hearing be tabled for a later date."

- c. A public hearing to consider an ordinance authorizing the sale of 101 North Blvd; 105 North Carolina Ave; 300 St. John St; 52 North Carolina Ave; 246 St. Luke St; 115 Jolly Alley; 522 Hinton St; 500 St. John St; 612 Pegram St; 151 St. Mark St; 709 Ann St; 735 Halifax St; 334 Harrison St; 803 Jones St S; 604 Shore St; 425 West St S; 715 West St S; 449 Harding St; 517 St. Matthew St; 980 Sycamore St S; 716 Harding St; 708-10 Kirkham St; 724 Harding St; 249

*Audio available upon request.

North Carolina Ave; 808 Halifax St; 811 Halifax St; 839-41 Jones St S; 716 Kirkham St; 742 Mount Airy St; 829 Jones St S; 742 Blick St; 627 Harding St; 516 Hinton St; 804 Jones St S; 135 Kentucky Ave; 230 Kentucky Ave Rear; 712-14 Kirkham St; 436 Byrne St; 809 Jones St S; 408 Shore St; 415 St. Matthew St; 1004 Farmer St; 852 Rome St; 328 Shore St; 322 Shore St; 204 Kentucky Ave; 521 St Mark St; 725 Sterling St; 731 West St S; 919 Wythe St W; 1022 High Pearl St; 202 Kentucky Ave; 151 Virginia Ave and 539 Washington St W.

Mayor Parham stated, "Item C has also been asked to be tabled to a later date."

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

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

Julian Greene, Jr., 1625 Blair Road, stated, "I come before you to give and appreciation for those members who attended First Baptist Highway Marker Unveiling. It specific it was in reference to the Honorable Mayor Sam Parham, the City Manager Mrs. Benavides who attended and participated and Ward 4 Mr. Cuthbert. It was glorious affair. The top lady in the state with the Department of Historic Resources, Julie Langan, of Organizational Structure who is in charge of the entire Commonwealth of Virginia was there. And she said that the credentials at First Baptist Church were never in question. The sign says that we are one of the oldest. First Baptist is the oldest in North America. History is always evolving. You may find someone later on that is older than First Baptist. I also want to give thanks to Kemi. This young lady is skilled and talented and professional and she is courteous. I really appreciate her getting this information out to the public and doing it in a timely manner. And then there was under the Director of Planning, Mrs. Michelle Peters and then Kate Sangregorio. I want to give thanks and appreciation to them as well as leave a copy to those who were not able to make it. There is something in there that I want you to be able to see that is on the marker that is declared by Ms. Langan. It says that Peabody was originated in First Baptist Church back in 1870. One marker will be delivered at the end of February. I have the Triangle to get a marker for and Josephine Jones House, which is where Martin Luther King stayed when he came to Petersburg and then I also have one that I am missing. Thank you so very much."

Annie Mickens, 1013 Melville Street, stated, "The first thing I want to do is to thank Mr. Cuthbert for commenting on council accountability with the public. You did make a conversation that this is a lot of information. We had a lot of important information dumped on the public tonight. As well as yourselves. We are working to try to help the community understand and know the knowledge and understand what is actually happened. So, when we call you to come to us we would expect the clarity of what you are talking about. We are getting ready to go into another budget. And those items coming out of this audit become important to us. People have no idea what a CAFR is and why is it important. And they don't have the chance to ask questions here. And so when we ask you to come to us it is because we want to be a knowledgeable community. We want to be able to speak with clarity. We want to take out information that is not misinformation. Second, I had the opportunity to attend the memorial service for Dr. Margaret Crowder Johnson. For many people she is an icon. The City should provide a proclamation for that family. She is not just an icon for the City of Petersburg. She is a national icon being the first female African American physician that completed Howard University. And so, I would ask that you consider that and have someone to research the history. It is never too late to honor the importance and value of people because that is who we are. So, I

*Audio available upon request.

would ask that you do that. And then Peabody will never go away. We are continuing to work. There is a national movement to preserve historic African American Institutions of Education. We will continue to work to do that. I believe that if the community gets behind the idea to do that because it is important enough then you will too. Thank you so much.”

Samuel Rhue, 1952 S. Westchester Drive, stated, “First of all some good news tonight on the audit of 2018. I didn’t have a question about that. So, congratulations on that. I know that you have a lot of work to do but that was a big step forward. Also, on the collection rates of the water. I was very impressed with that. But I do have a concern. A question was asked sometime ago about were there funds withheld from any City agency because the audit was not complete. I verified that for the library funds are being withheld. It is one thing that we have to be proud of in Petersburg is that when you drive down Washington Street and we see the library. This is an example of what we can do here. So, that is why it is so important that these audits are done. The City needs to be run like a corporation and business. Those things we cannot miss. It is unacceptable and it has to be done. So, now what we have now is somewhere around \$150,000 that the library has not received and it might be in jeopardy of receiving following years if those audits are not completed in a timely fashion. I urge you to focus on this City as a business to drive to those results. Thank you.”

Richard Stewart, 129 Rolfe Street, stated, “I would first like to thank the Progress-Index and Mayor Mickens for complimenting me. The article that got put in the Progress-Index had gone nationwide with statewide attention. People have been coming here last week from all over wanting to see the oldest black community in the USA that people of all color live together and still survive. The guy that wrote the article is a great guy and I think he is here tonight. I stand here tonight and I am afraid. I am afraid of guns. Mr. Noise over there tonight is loaded with bullets and everything. So, what is going on in the General Assembly? Are they going to stop arms and things from coming on public property and all this type of stuff. Ever since that killing down in Georgia some years ago. Somebody walked into the courtroom and somebody shot the judge. I do not feel secure of coming in here when people can bring firearms in here. And even though the police department is doing a good job is there any way that you can stop firearms from coming on this property. Or get some type of metal detector to stop them from coming in here. Because right now if Mr. Noise was to take that gun out and start shooting it is no way in the world that he can be stopped. My question is that is there any ordinance that can stop this type of stuff from coming on this property. I do not feel secured. Thank you.”

Barb Rudolph, 1675 Mt. Vernon Street, stated, “I got an idea from Councilor Smith-Lee. I am one of those little old ladies that need to be taken care of. My first thing is that I have formally asked for permission about hanging a poster on the wall. And I would appreciate a written response to that. I will leave it at that. My other comment is that I was going to mention that Mr. Evans, Billing and Collections Supervisor. I know that he has had to really jump in and have a lot of things to deal with. But here is one more. The personal property tax bills that we recently received. I have asked a lot of people and a number of people have said that their bills appear to be fine and that is good news. But I am one of the people that has delinquent charges on my bill for no reason. I get three different paper bills and three delinquent charges on there. That adds up to almost \$400. So, my bill went for \$509 when it should have been for \$111. That is kind of a big difference. Then when you look at the online bills there even more extreme. They are \$770. Anyway, the point that you can take from all that is that the point is not in sync. The bills that are online do not show the same thing. Again, some citizens bills maybe correct but mine have been messed up for a long time. Mine are predating back to the prior administration. I am not pointing fingers to you guys but it needs to be fixed. And I am asking. Because I don’t think that if I put it in writing or try to call it will get addressed. That appears to be what happened to my last request for permission. So, I am formally asking for help with my bills. Thank you.”

Porfirio Barnes, 3333 East Princeton Road, stated, “I would like to address personal property taxes here in the City of Petersburg. There is a standing practice all over the state. It is 100% service connection for disabled veterans. There is no place in Hampton Roads and several places here exempt us. Is there any reason why Petersburg does not honor that? This was put in place by Governor McDonald on May 10, 2010.

*Audio available upon request.

And I just want to know is there any reason why Petersburg does not honor. It is not a gift. We earned this as disabled veterans in protecting this nation. I would just like for you to consider that. Thank you.”

Willie Noise, 1508 Circle Drive, stated, “Don’t I look stupid. That is what it is all about. And tonight, money. We need more money for code, police and street maintenance. When picked up on the street and may be charged and placed in detox for a month, habitual offenders, we are not doing anything for the habitual offenders and the alcohol and the mental challenged. We pick them up and put them through the system and let them go again. We are coordinators and not organizers. If someone keep telling you that you are crazy then check into. Pleasant thoughts enjoyable. Devil, evil nature department. We have one now. We cannot separate the devil department from Christian department because they both exist. Gun violence. Using a gun for self defense is what it is suppose to be about. Mr. Tucker, Mr. Jones, Tom McCray and my baby brother Herman Noise were victims of weapons. Stop saying what America want and have proof. Unless you say that is what you think. Have a team of ten and conduct several test on Petersburg given by Virginia State. The only way that you are going to get time in the end is that you got to put it in. No one wants to agree to one major culture. Double standards. What weakens one strengthens another. Think. What you hear and what you think you heard. These are some of the things that I wanted to mention to you tonight. And I want to thank Councilman. We are still trying to get a unified prayer. And I think the serenity prayer is one that should be prayed every other prayer or meeting or see if we can get in maybe more than one time. I really like the spirit of this council. Everybody is thinking and patting each other on the back and agreeing and stuff. I really like that. But please let’s get the guns out of this council. We don’t need it here. I really got upset the last time that I was here. And please do something about it. Thank you.”

Ron Flock, 1708 Pender Avenue, stated, “I have a lot and hope that you do not mind if I go a couple of seconds over. This is just bullet points. Senate Bill 35, firearm, etc. permitted events to ban firearms in government places. I would hope that you would have the City Attorney to draft an ordinance to get right on it. There is a section that I don’t agree with. The part that I don’t agree with is in the streets. The cost of what it would be to replace the lights with LED’s. It would seem like an awful lot but I do not know. I just want to know if we can get a breakdown on the units and price of what that would be. Councilman Hill, the day of the Virginia State homecoming parade you and I had a little discussion about the Liberty Mart. And I suggested to you that possible City Council could make a motion and grant them relieve on a significant portion of the water bill because they had 200 lined up outside to use there bathroom that day. Because no one afforded porta johns for the parade and anyone standing around. And I do not think that it is far for anyone in the City to have to pay that. How much does it cost the City to mail me two bills for \$0? I am not the only one. I have had the discussion back when Robert Bob was here. And there is approximately 1,100 vehicles in the City back then that do not pay personal property taxes and we still send a bill to them. So, that is a significant cost per year. I have made the recommendation to several people that there should be a minimum personal property tax of \$20. And that should be \$100,000 for the City every year. Instead o costing us to do it. I have two vehicles that are exempt because of their age. The collection rates that was up there, in one instance it was made later. I do not understand how you can have a 100% of collection rate so consistently. Are we getting money from other municipality’s to get us up there? And I had to go over to our new finance building and I had a conversation with Ms. Flowers. Unfortunately I am not as tall as Mr. Parham or Mr. Myers. And neither are most of the people in the world. So, if someone can put a platform over there so that the counter is here on me. So, if you can put a platform that so that they can at least look up over the counter to who they are talking to that would be appreciated. Thank you.”

Linwood Christian, 410 Mistletoe Street, stated, “There are a couple of things that I want to bring to your attention. Some of you all on City Hall, when Petersburg’s Annex, Prince George County, the part that is Battlefield Park, there was some promises that was made towards the community at that time that annexed that area. As of today, there are still no sidewalks out there in Battlefield Park. And I say that because even when I was sitting with our PTA President, a lot of those young people walking from Petersburg High and Vernon Johns. They are at very serious risk of being struck by buses, cars and everything else. And I would

*Audio available upon request.

say to City Council that all with what we are doing, rather than being concerned about a dog park and a walking trail. We need to look at the safety of our citizens and in particular our young people out there in Battlefield Park. I think they deserve as much. Also, again I would say. Instead of this City being concerned about a trail stretching from Ashland down to Petersburg, we need to be thinking about the activities of our young people. One of the main reasons why the young people are staying on Facebook, fighting and killing one another and acting crazy because they have nothing to do. Again, I am renewing my call for Petersburg to undo what Robert Bobb had you all to do and restore funding to the recreation department. Because right now a lot of people are talking and the City of Petersburg is doing nothing to address the gun violence but talk. We need to look at where it is. Our young people have nothing to do. There is talk that Ms. Tyus and others are going to try and put on a youth conference. When word was out that our neighborhood association was planning that, rather than doing a doubletake, why did no one reach out to us and say that they were doing this first but how can we do this together. But yet members of council and others have the nerve to talk about us as citizens and say that something is not right. Why try to recreate the wheel when it is already being created. Thank you.”

Bruce Richardson, 1106 N. Thompson Street, stated, “I am a proud product of the Delectable Heights in Petersburg, Virginia. I ask that we have conversation on giving some recognition to Mr. Jimmy ‘Gut’ Johnson. He has coached many of us on The Heights. Treska Smith is in remembrance of Mr. Johnson. And I also ask that we give recognition to Mr. John Roy, Sr, ‘Bip’, who had coached me as well. I come also asking that while still living we recognize Ms. Sheba Miles who fed us for years to the NYSP program at Virginia Avenue Elementary School. I come to you guys as someone that grew up on The Heights. And many people in this crowd, we have to encourage those who still see things from a far. Petersburg in my opinion has always and will always be a jewel. And I think that we fail when we don’t encourage people who maybe live in a surrounding area to not come back and support the City. With that being said, that on February 29th, Saturday, we will be hosting another home buyer’s education course. It is open to the general public. I encourage each of you to get this out to your ward members. One fact we know is that where there is good credit there is good community. It may seem minimal. But I ask any individual that wish to attend this event on the 29th at the Petersburg Public Library, it is free to the public. Each participant will receive a certificate of completion that will allow them to work with any VHDA approved lender. We have got to address blight and prepare the residence to take advantage of this opportunity. We have got to get the residence prepared for homeownership. We also need to talk to young people about homeownership and credit and things of that nature. We are going to be working with Petersburg Public Schools and people in the community for such. Once again, I thank each of you for your effort. I am here to support the City of Petersburg.”

13. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FOR/FROM THE MAYOR OR COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, “Thank you. Thank all of you for being in attendance tonight. This is your City Council meeting and I am glad to see each every one of you. I have a total of three things tonight if you don’t mind. The first one is that, our council agreed by way of a vote to establish commemorative street signs. Based on our support and endeavor I would like to make a motion that we start out with the following four individuals. This is important to do during the African American history month. To make our own history. The first one being the corner of St. Matthew and High Pearl Street to honor Moses Malone, the corner of New and Byrne Street to honor Dr. Germaine and Hermanze (former Mayor) Fauntleroy, the corner of Halifax and Lee Avenue in honor of Colonel Howard Baugh and the corner of Harrison and New Street in honor of Susie R. C. Byrd. The council did establish a policy in reference to doing this. This is not to rename streets. This is to add commemorative street names only. It will only be assigned with their names on it. And that is a motion.”

Council Member Wilson-Smith made a motion to add commemorative street names with the corner of St. Matthew and High Pearl Street to honor Moses Malone, the corner of New and Byrne Street to honor Dr. Germaine and former Mayor Hermanze Fauntleroy, the corner of Halifax and Lee Avenue in honor of Colonel Howard Baugh and the corner of Harrison and New Street in honor of Susie R. C. Byrd. The motion was

*Audio available upon request.

seconded by Council Member Myers. There was discussion on the motion among Council and staff.

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "May I say something else please. Before we take a vote let the record show that the application was completed and the resolution was written. It was submitted and it was also decided by the Mayor that it would not be brought forth tonight on the agenda. However, the process was followed so the rules were carried. It is still a motion."

Mayor Parham stated, "We had agenda review on the Monday before this meeting and all the items were decided at the agenda review meeting. And we do not accept items after that cutoff point."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "We have come in here at council meetings and had an updated agenda. Just like we do tonight. We have done several agenda's where we put items at the last meeting or the last minute or after council has received the packet. So, that statement is quite unacceptable to me."

Mayor Parham stated, "It is just like everything else. We have rules and we have deadlines Council Member Wilson-Smith. You missed the point. If it is late it does not make the agenda. We have several items on here that did not make the timeframe and they are not on the agenda."

There was discussion on the clarification of the motion among council and staff.

Council Member Cuthbert made a substitute motion to table until the next regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Mayor Parham. The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Smith-Lee, Hill and Parham; Voting No: Wilson-Smith and Myers; Absent: Hart

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "The next item that I have on the agenda has to deal with the City Manager's report. It is just a question on public safety where it says weight capacity has begin with certified officers. But we received some letter or correspondence from some judge. Doesn't council have to vote on that first?"

Mrs. Benavides stated, "Yes ma'am. I believe that as we have started to investigate this a presentation was made by our police chief earlier. As we started the transition, an ordinance was developed but never made to a council agenda. But as our new City Attorney has come on aboard we have to bring back that ordinance to solidify this to council. But the work was done by public safety and was submitted. We have all of the transactions of it being submitted but unfortunately as we go back it was not properly voted on by council. So, we will be bringing that back."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "So, that will be coming back at the next council meeting?"

Mr. Williams stated, "It will come back when the police department is ready to bring it back. Usually it is a pretty substantial process with overweight vehicles that I am not sure occurred when this was initially presented in concept. One of the issues that you run into is that you foreclose vehicles from delivering to businesses. So, ordinarily you would setup truck routes and communication with the downtown businesses. I do not think that this occurred. You were just presented with a concept and but they did not actually have the ordinance put in place and that this is was the judge was raising. And they are working on it but I am not sure of the timeline of when the police would like to bring it back."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "The last thing I had was is just a statement. Petersburg has lost a citizen who has contributed so very greatly to this City. So, if we an all lift the Harris Family up in prayer and remember Mr. Shorty Harris from Petersburg, Virginia. And that is all that I have."

Council Member Cuthbert stated, "Thank you Mr. Mayor. One item is that I am holding a ward meeting

*Audio available upon request.

on Wednesday, March 4th at 6:30pm at St. Mark's United Methodist Church on Claremont. The focus of the meeting is going to be issues that the City can help citizens with and if citizens from other wards care to attend they are more than welcome. There will be staff members there and I am sure will be delighted to work on their problems as well as the 4th Ward residents problems. That is Wednesday, March 4th at St. Mark's United Methodist Church, 6:30pm on Claremont Street. I look forward to that and I look forward to helping the citizens to address their concerns with the help of staff. Mr. Mayor thank you very much."

Council Member Smith-Lee stated, "Good evening everyone. I just want us to take a moment of silence and reflect on John Hart so that God can heal his body. I just want to thank everybody for coming out to the joint ward meeting on last Tuesday. I was a little late coming from work and the Mayor and Darrin Hill filled in until I got there. That is what a team player do. Thank you all for doing that. We had an outstanding meeting. Also, I just want to remind everyone how important the 2020 Census is. Please when you receive those cards in the mail, if you are going to do it online, if you need me to come over to help you fill it out. It is imperative that we fill out the paperwork so, that we can all be accounted for in the City. Also, I would like to thank the W.H.O.P. City Group and the Alpha Phi Alpha Inc. They are going into the schools on February 28. I think it is going to be 100 men. They are going to read to the elementary students. And the book is the 'Toothpaste Millionaire'. So, if you want to look it up and maybe read and go out and volunteer to read to the kids in the City of Petersburg. All of the elementary schools and the students there are going to receive that book. That concludes my report."

Council Member Hill stated, "Good evening everyone. I want to thank the staff, citizens and everyone for being here today. I do understand that we need to meet certain deadlines in order for us to get certain funding. And I know the question was asked did we miss any deadlines of funding with us not having our budget or CAFR done. I would hope that we would work with the state to make sure that we are eligible with those funds. In particular, the library and things of that nature. Also, I just want to make an announcement. For organization, we are celebrating what we call 'Unity Day' at Tabernacle Baptist Church on the 23rd of February at the 11am service. If you belong to nay type of organization we ask that you come out and fellowship with us. Also, I did not get a chance to do this but the brain child behind the Bill755 is Council Member Myers. Council Member Cuthbert gave him his kudos last time. Council Member Cuthbert stated that he wish he would have thought of it. We just really want to thank him for introducing that bill to the agenda. That was his brain child in helping move the City of Petersburg forward. It was so brilliant that both sides of the aisle wanted to adopt it and now it is being adopted by other City's and counties in the State of Virginia. I am very proud of him and council for putting that on our agenda item. We do thank those individuals who help carry those bills through. Whether it be our Delegate or our Senator. But it did start here in this council chambers. Also, on March 12, tentatively, would be Ward 2 meeting. It should start at 6pm. I will have further details at the next meeting. Thank you Mr. Mayor."

Mayor Parham stated, "Good evening everyone. I just want to piggyback off what Council Member Hill said about Council Member Myers and the House Bill 755. We are still pushing. We are going up there tomorrow morning to the Senate Finance Committee at 9am to continue to push to get this bill through. It is a great asset to the City and I thank Council Member Myers. And anyone that can come to support us are welcome. This has been our fourth or fifth time to advocate for this bill. Also, I want to ask everyone if you have some time to go visit some of the elementary schools. I had the pleasure to visit Pleasant's Lane Elementary School. I had a chance to talk to some of our young boys that are soon to be our young men. That was there first time meeting that Mayor of Petersburg and we had some good conversations along with sharing some snacks and talks. But it takes a team effort to change the mind state of our youth. That means that it talks each and every one of us to go out and get involved. Those young guys made a commitment to me that they are going to do better in school. I didn't talk to just the kids that were honor roll students I talked to the kids that had a few challenges. I wanted them to know that we care about them and we love them and their City is standing behind them and urging them to grow up and be productive citizens here in the City of Petersburg. I would also like to thank the Petersburg Police Department. These guys in here tonight, a round of applause to

*Audio available upon request.

them. Because they keep us safe in here. It is some very challenging times not just in Petersburg but throughout the nation. We really appreciate the service and protection that you all provide for us every day and every night. You all are on call 24/7 and you all are making an impact here. And just like most City's throughout the country we have some issues that need to be tightened up on. But as a whole you all keep Petersburg safe. If any questions come on down here on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. There are young adults here pushing strollers and runners running in the evening. Which is a sign of better time in Petersburg despite the challenges that we have. I did not see this until recent seeing the young babies after hours. Kudos to the chief and staff. We are there for you and we have your backs. Also, we are running up on our next council meeting. The train station, there is a voting day on March 3rd so we need to move the meeting to a location."

Council Member Hill stated, "Actually on that date, I don't think that we should meet unless you all want to meet on an alternate date in general. I think it would be a good time to talk to our constituents. I will not be at the meeting I will be at the polls talking to our constituents. So, if we want to do another date we can."

Mayor Parham stated, "I will take any type of comments from council whether you want to have the meeting that day or postpone it and have a meeting on another day."

Council Member Wilson-Smith stated, "Our Rules of Council, I believe state that if we don't have a meeting that day due to an holiday or other occasions that we have the meeting the following Tuesday."

Mayor Parham stated, "And the following Tuesday is NLC. And we have several council members that is going to be at NLC. So, we will not have a quorum."

Council Member Hill stated, "We can do it all on the 17th or if we want to do that Monday the 2nd."

Mayor Parham stated, "Ms. Jackson will send out a text message to confirm if that is an option. If not we will make other accommodations."

14. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA:

*No items for this portion of the agenda.

15. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

*No items for this portion of the agenda.

16. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Consideration of an appropriation for Virginia Department of Emergency Management – Radiological Preparedness Grant - \$1,830.00

BACKGROUND: The City of Petersburg receives grants annually to assist with training and equipment to assist in response to radiological emergencies. These funds are programmed for calibration of current equipment and additional monitoring equipment for responders in hazardous environments.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend that Council accept and appropriate the Virginia Department of Emergency Management – Radiological Preparedness grant funding in the amount of \$1,830 for year 2020.

Council Member Hill made a motion to approve and appropriate the Virginia Department of Emergency Management – Radiological Preparedness grant funding in the amount of \$1,830 for year 2020. The motion was seconded by Council Member Cuthbert.

*Audio available upon request.

Mayor Parham opened the floor for public comment.

Seeing no hands, Mayor Parham closed the public comments.

The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Smith-Lee, Hill and Parham; Absent: Hart

20-ORD-9 AN ORDINANCE, AS AMENDED, SAID ORDINANCE MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING JULY 1, 2019, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2020 FOR THE GRANTS FUND IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,830.

b. Consideration of an appropriation for Jarratt House project funding - \$20,000.

BACKGROUND: The Cameron Foundation funding of the Jarratt House is continuous to pay invoices for the stabilization of the Jarratt House.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the City Council's approval.

Council Member Myers made a motion to approve and appropriate the Virginia Department of Emergency Management – Radiological Preparedness grant funding in the amount of \$1,830 for year 2020. The motion was seconded by Council Member Smith-Lee.

Mayor Parham opened the floor for public comment.

Seeing no hands, Mayor Parham closed the public comments.

The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Smith-Lee, Hill and Parham; Absent: Hart

20-ORD-10 AN ORDINANCE, AS AMENDED, SAID ORDINANCE MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING JULY 1, 2019, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2020, THE CAMERON FOUNDATION GRANT FOR THE STABILIZATION OF THE JARRATT HOUSE IN THE CITY OF PETERSBURG.

c. Consideration of supplemental appropriations for Community Corrections - \$1,959

BACKGROUND: Community Corrections in Petersburg is responsible for local probation and pretrial services for individuals in Petersburg and Dinwiddie County. The Commonwealth of Virginia via the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services has authorized the following increase to Petersburg Community Corrections.

- \$1,959 for "Supplies and Other" for staff development and/or the advancement of evidence based practices.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend City Council approve the attached appropriation ordinance in the amount of \$1,959.

Council Member Myers made a motion to approve the appropriation ordinance in the amount of \$1,959. The motion was seconded by Council Member Hill.

Mayor Parham opened the floor for public comment.

*Audio available upon request.

Seeing no hands, Mayor Parham closed the public comments.

The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Smith-Lee, Hill and Parham; Absent: Hart

20-ORD-11 AN ORDINANCE, AS AMENDED, SAID ORDINANCE MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR COMMENCING JULY 1, 2019, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2020, FOR THE GRANTS FUND IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,959.

- d. Consideration to authorize the City Manager to enter into an agreement with the Cameron Foundation for the construction and maintenance of the Appomattox River Trailhead.

Mayor Parham stated, "It has asked to be tabled. So, we will table this and move right along."

- e. Consideration of a Resolution to approve the Transportation Development Plan for Petersburg Area Transit.

BACKGROUND: The Transportation Development Plan is mandated by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), in order to provide technical guidance for PAT's capital and operating program needs in the Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP), Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Through these efforts, the plan helps maximize the investment of public transit funds to achieve the greatest possible public benefit.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommend City Council approve the attached resolution to adopt Petersburg Area Transit's Transportation Development Plan.

Council Member Hill made a motion to approve the resolution to adopt Petersburg Area Transit's Transportation Development Plan. The motion was seconded by Council Member Myers.

Mayor Parham opened the floor for public comment.

Seeing no hands, Mayor Parham closed the public comments.

There was discussion among council and staff. The motion was approved on roll call vote. On roll call vote, voting yes: Cuthbert, Wilson-Smith, Myers, Smith-Lee, Hill and Parham; Absent: Hart

20-R-11 A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR PETERSBURG AREA TRANSIT.

17. CITY MANAGER'S AGENDA:

Mrs. Benavides stated, "I just want to mention that we are scheduled to have a press conference tomorrow to discuss the CAFR with the press. Because of the hearing, we are checking out to see if we can move it back to 12noon. I will send out an email to you either this evening or first thing in the morning to let you know if we need to move it to 11am or 12noon. Our goal is noon to allow enough time for council to be there to testify. I think it is important to get the message out. Ms. Kemi is working on that now. But you will receive a message from us about the press conference tomorrow. Thank you."

18. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM THE CLERK:

*Audio available upon request.

*No items for this portion of the agenda.

19. BUSINESS OR REPORTS FROM CITY ATTORNEY:

*No items for this portion of the agenda.

20. ADJOURNMENT:

City Council adjourned at 10:07p.m.

Clerk of City Council

APPROVED:

Mayor

DRAFT