



COUNCIL

Communicates

Highlights from City Council Meetings

December 12, 2023

Petersburg Public Library

City Council Members

Ward 1

Marlow Jones

mjones@petersburg-va.org

Ward 2

Darrin Hill

Vice Mayor

dhill@petersburg-va.org

Ward 3

Samuel Parham

Mayor

sparham@petersburg-va.org

Ward 4

Charles Cuthbert

Mayor

ccuthbert@petersburg-va.org

Ward 5

W. Howard Myers

whowardmyers@petersburg-va.org

Ward 6

Anette Smith-Lee

alee@petersburg-va.org

Ward 7

Arnold Westbrook

awestbrook@petersburg-va.org

Clerk of Council

Nykesha Jackson

njackson@petersburg-va.org

804-733-2323

Please Note:

These are not the official minutes of the City Council meeting.

The official minutes and agendas can be accessed on the city website:

www.petersburg-va.org

Please note that the official minutes are not posted until approved by City Council.

Regular Council Meeting

5:00 pm

1. Roll Call
Mayor Parham was absent.
2. Prayer
Led by Vice Mayor Hill.
3. Pledge of Allegiance
Led by Vice Mayor Hill.
4. Determination of the Presence of a Quorum
Quorum present.
5. Proclamations/Recognitions/Presentation of Ceremonial Proclamations
 - a. Presentation and Update on L.L. Bean and City of Petersburg Christmas Event Weekend.
No action taken.
 - b. Presentation by Green Infrastructure Center Inc. on the Urban Forestry Community Assistance Program.
No action taken.
 - c. Presentation and Update on Poor Creek
No action taken.
 - d. Presentation and Update on Capital Projects
No action taken.

12. **Finance and Budget Report (Moved up in agenda)**
 - a. Presentation and Update on City Finances
The Finance Department reported that the City had approximately \$52M.
No action was taken.
6. Responses to Previous Public Information Posted
Council Communicates.
7. Approval of Consent Agenda (to include minutes of previous meetings):
 - a. Minutes:
 - November 21, 2023, Closed Session City Council Meeting
 - November 21, 2023, Regular City Council Meeting
 - b. Consideration of an ordinance for an SRO Grant Initiative Program in the amount of \$278,561 - 1st Reading
Approved.
8. Official Public Hearings
None.
9. 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 removed from consent agenda.

William Jones

Stated that new schools are needed, and repairs are required now at schools.

Pam Bingham

Questioned accuracy of utility bills. Commented on outside agencies “pimping” city to obtain grant funding. Stated the need for workforce development.

Dr. Sarah Witiak

Stated that citizens should have input prior to trees being removed on Sycamore Street and other locations throughout the city.

Genevieve Lohr

The City must do better with taking care of things. Correct trees should be planted so as not to disturb sidewalks. Stated that a realtor site used gentrification in marketing houses in Petersburg. According to the CDC, she also stated that gentrification does not improve health outcomes.

Barb Rudolph

She reminded the Council that a public hearing should be held before approving resolutions and ordinances. Stated that city leadership should engage with citizens on a possible casino.

Tommy Hariston

He stated the need for a new school and would like to see a groundbreaking for a casino and a new school simultaneously. Asked that the Council not disapprove of duplexes.

Kat McKay

Thanked City for promotion and Economic Development for assistance with the successful L.L. Bean weekend.

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

Councilman Cuthbert

Discussed success stories in fighting blight. He stated his concern about trees being removed on Sycamore Street and asked for a replanting plan.

Councilman Jones

He stated there had been much learning during his first year on the Council and that he felt being on the Council was a blessing.

Councilman Westbrook

Congratulated Petersburg High students on their debate success and asked that the community not forget the elderly during the winter months.

Councilman Myers

Discussed the relaunch of Friday for the Arts.

Councilwoman Smith-Lee

Discussed progress in the city and announced a Ward 6 meeting in February. She also announced an upcoming Health Expo in Pecan Acres.

Vice Mayor Hill

Reflected on the end of the year – thanked staff and public relations team. Asked city manager about the plan for parking lots in the Downtown/Old Towne area. Reminded Ward 2 residents about leaf collection and discussed transformation along Halifax Street.

11. Items removed from Consent Agenda

None.

12. Finance and Budget Report

- a. Presentation and Update on City Finances

Moved up in the agenda.

13. Unfinished Business

None.

14. New Business

- a. A resolution of the City Council supporting the application and participation in the Urban Forestry Community Assistance Program.
Petersburg's Director of Planning asked for Council support.

Public Comment

Barb Rudolph

Endorses approving the resolution and the need for educating citizens on the ecosystem.

Pamela Bingham

No one hates trees, but grant programs should benefit community residents. She wants to see workforce development and city agencies and residents receiving grants.

Leonard Curry

He stated there are 18 federal grants for distressed communities that include stormwater and trees. Wants the City to submit a comprehensive grant application for Choice Neighborhoods.

Dr. Sarah Witiak

Supports project.

Approved.

15. City Manager's Report

Happy holidays.

16. Business or reports from the Clerk

None.

17. Business or reports from the City Attorney

None.

18. Adjournment