

January 6, 2009

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD JANUARY 6, 2009

A Work Session of the City Council of the City of Hopewell, Virginia, was held Tuesday, January 6, 2009, at 5:30 PM in the City Council Chambers, Municipal Building, 300 North Main Street, Hopewell, Virginia.

PRESENT: Brenda S. Pelham, Mayor
N. Gregory Cuffey, Vice Mayor
Christina J. Luman-Bailey, Councilor
Curtis W. Harris, Councilor
Kenneth B. Emerson, Councilor
Gerald S. Stokes, Councilor
K. Wayne Walton, Councilor

Ann M. Romano, City Clerk
Edwin C. Daley, City Manager
Elesteen Hager, Finance Director

Mayor Pelham opened the Work Session at 5:30 PM. Roll call was taken as follows:

Mayor Pelham	-	present
Vice Mayor Cuffey	-	present
Councilor Bailey	-	present
Councilor Harris	-	ABSENT (arrived 5:37 PM)
Councilor Emerson	-	present
Councilor Stokes	-	present
Councilor Walton	-	present

Mayor Pelham opened the meeting and Vice Mayor Cuffey offered the prayer.

Dr. Daley introduced two items on the agenda: 1) Preliminary Budget Report; and 2) Work Session Topics for the remainder of January 2009.

BUDGET DISCUSSION

Mr. Hager provided Council with handouts: 2008-09 Budget for Council Review, and Budget Projections for 2009/2010 Budget: **1.** General Fund - 5-year forecast; **2.** General Fund - detailed revenue/expense forecast for 2008/2009 budget year; **3.** Recreation & Parks - 5-year forecast; **4.** Marina Fund - 5-year forecast; **5.** Capital Projects Fund - 5-year forecast; **6.** Economic Development Fund - 5-year forecast; and **7.** Self-insured Fund - 5-year forecast. (Filed in the City Clerk's office.)

Mr. Hager gave detailed explanations with his presentation indicating that the City spent more last year than it took in. There was concern for declining reserves. Mr. Hager has a 230-page detailed report available for any Council member who would like to review it. The GFOA (Government Finance Officers Association) recommends a fund balance of 15-25%. The bond rating wants to see a fund balance of 15% and up. Hopewell City Council has a self-imposed 10% "rainy day fund." The undesignated fund balance is \$2.8M. He indicated that there may be a need to raise the tax rate by \$0.20 (twenty cents). There also may be a need to cut personnel.

Discussion:

The City Manager also suggested eliminating meal for City Council meetings to which Council agreed. Employees will no longer have City cell phones with the exception of law enforcement, which phones will be attached to vehicles, rather than individuals.

January 6, 2009

There was brief discussion about the date that the new real estate reassessments will be available. In some localities they are sent out by December 31, however the City of Hopewell's will be out by February 15. There was brief discussion on an Education Contract with Fort Lee for schools in Hopewell.

TOPICS FOR JANUARY WORK SESSIONS

January 13, 2009 - Closed Session - Personnel; Update on property acquisition for economic development; and Council direction for review of Downtown Plan and "B" Village Plan.

January 27, 2009 - Work Session - Rental Inspection Program report; Emergency Crew Report; Presentation on Wastewater Treatment Plant; Discussion of City-owned properties; Employee Retention report; and Budget Review.

January 30-February 1, 2009 - Council Advance at the Library.

Discussion:

Graffiti throughout the city must be addressed. Dr. Daley indicated that graffiti was removed from the State Code.

The Downtown Partnership is waiting to hear from the City Planner or the Director of Development regarding the Downtown Plan. It was suggested that perhaps there should be a public hearing with the Planning Commission and then with City Council regarding the overlay district that does not allow residential.

Topics for Future Work Session(s):

1. With the Planning Commission - Overlay District - Downtown Plan;
2. With the Beacon Theatre;
3. Discussion about sales tax (for legislation in the 2010/2011 year);
4. Train Report (loud noise from train horns);
5. Booker Street Project - adding that street into the state system;
6. Former Patrick Copeland Site - Street Scape Appomattox Street;
7. Bad Air Reports.

ADJOURN

At 7:53 PM motion was made by Vice Mayor Cuffey, and seconded by Councilor Harris, to adjourn the meeting. Upon the roll call, the vote resulted:

Councilor Emerson	-	yes
Councilor Stokes	-	yes
Councilor Walton	-	yes
Mayor Pelham	-	yes
Vice Mayor Cuffey	-	yes
Councilor Bailey	-	yes
Councilor Harris	-	yes

Brenda S. Pelham
Mayor

Ann M. Romano, City Clerk