

August 28, 2015
Special City Council Meeting

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD AUGUST 28, 2015

A Special Meeting of the City Council of the City of Hopewell, Virginia was held on Friday, August 28, 2015, at 4:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, Municipal Building, 300 North Main Street, Hopewell, Virginia.

PRESENT: Jasmine E. Gore, Councilor
Jackie M. Shornak, Councilor
K. Wayne Walton, Councilor

Mark Haley, City Manager
Stefan M. Calos, City Attorney
Ross A. Kearney, III, City Clerk

ABSENT: Brenda S. Pelham, Mayor
Christina Luman-Bailey, Vice Mayor
Arlene Holloway, Councilor
Anthony V. Zevgolis, Councilor

ROLL CALL

City Clerk, Ross A. Kearney, III opened the meeting at 4:00 p.m. Roll call was taken as follows:

Mayor Pelham	-	ABSENT
Vice Mayor Luman- Bailey	-	ABSENT
Councilor Holloway	-	ABSENT
Councilor Zevgolis	-	ABSENT
Councilor Gore	-	present
Councilor Walton	-	present
Councilor Shornak	-	present

OPEN SPECIAL MEETING/WORK SESSION

The Clerk, having taken the roll and determined that no quorum was present and there was no hope of getting one soon, entertained a motion to adjourn or to continue the special meeting to a later date.

Councilor Walton moved to wait a few minutes to see if a quorum would eventually form and while waiting made the following statement:

“Today is our second attempt to have a Council Retreat to help work out the direction of our City. Again several Councilors have chosen to be absent despite the commitment from all to attend. This happened the last scheduled retreat. Now it has been 8 months since the new leadership took over and it seems the City Council has come to a complete stop. Good things have happened though in spite of Council’s lack of direction. Our staff has done an outstanding job without us. Maybe that is alright but as a policy making board of a 100 million dollar corporation this is unacceptable. It seems a shame that our Junior Councilor has had to push this along and not been supported by our leaders! Councilor Gore, to her credit has stayed on course to make our strategic plan something of a guideline for our staff. We need this! Who is going to come in and do business with us if we don’t have a plan? I challenge this Council to get on one page and quit looking for excuses not to do things instead of preparing this City for the future.”

Councilor K. Wayne Walton
Ward 5

Councilor Shornak also made a statement into the record while waiting to see if a quorum would form.

“I am here today to show my concern that two City Council Retreats have been cancelled by other members of Council after securing dates already agreed upon. I understand that emergencies come up, but to keep delaying scheduling the retreat is not good for the City. It is the utmost importance that we meet and discuss last year’s Strategic Plan and know where we stand in obtaining our goals and where we need to be going. I encourage other Councilors to place the Council Retreat high on their priority list.”

Councilor Jackie M. Shornak
Ward 7

Councilor Gore also made a statement into the record while waiting to see if a quorum would form.

“The City Attorney, the City Manager and the City Clerk, Councilor Walton and Councilor Shornak, I would like to thank for helping to fight to have this meeting and to some it may not make sense but this is really a last ditch effort to try to get a meeting. I went back through the emails to look at the remarks that were made as to why we should not be having this meeting. I went back through the Agenda Packets from 2013 and 2014 and what we did to call the last Strategic Plan, we never voted on that plan either, it was called a work session in January and it was a unanimous consent to the idea of having a planning session but we never voted to do it, even still we worked towards holding a meeting and planning it via email. In November 10th we held special meeting just like this one now and only four Council members attended that meeting that was myself, Councilor Shornak, Councilor Bailey and Councilor Pelham at the time. Even still with us four people meeting to talk about ideas for the plan we still had the Advance, so this is not the first time and we did this last year and even still just doing this we had a plan and was created and passed unanimously, so the thought that people meeting to iron out preliminary ideas

is going to somehow mean that we dictate the direction the City clearly that's not true because we had a plan that passed by everyone in June of the next year. I also want to share that even when we did that last planning cycle we confirmed the dates to book it, we got two different options then, we also got two different options for preliminary interviews to talk to the facilitator and then after that the strategic plan we held it in January and then staff had their own Advance in April. I also want to stress this is a multi-month process and this is not something that happens in just one meeting. It took us from November 2013 to June 2014 to have a plan. So just imagine if we start now when will we end with the reversion of the plan? Lastly, I just want say for this meeting we are having here tonight there is no doubt in February, on January 27 an email was sent out to us about our availability, in February we booked it for March 20th and 21st and it was cancelled on March 4th, we did the same thing in June, an email was sent out about our availability and it was booked on June 26th for August 28th and 29th and it was cancelled up until a couple days ago even after the Clerk had sent out emails asking us to finalize our Agenda items and I did and after multiple times of it being placed on the Agenda to finalize topics and ideas so the premise that this was something out of the blue is ridiculous because I would say for at least two or three months we have talked about it at Council meetings. So we will just have to see what happens and my concern will be, and I will say publicly, if we set another date what will happened if the same thing happens that is happening now, are we going to still be in the same situation to where we only have three people present to try to do our job?"

Councilor Jasmine E. Gore
Ward 4

After determining that a quorum would not be obtained, a motion was made by Councilor Gore to continue the special meeting to September 8, 2015 at 7:30 p.m., which motion was seconded by Councilor Walton. Upon an Aye or Nay vote, the motion was unanimously passed and the meeting was continued until September 8, 2015, at 7:30 p.m.

At 4:26 p.m. the City Clerk continued the meeting until September 8, 2015, at 7:30 p.m.

/s/ Ross A. Kearney III

Ross A. Kearney, III, City Clerk