

**January 10, 2023**  
**Regular Council Meeting**  
**Hopewell City Council**

A regular council meeting of the Hopewell City Council was convened on Tuesday, January 10, 2023 in the City Council Chambers, Municipal Building, 300 North Main Street, Hopewell, Virginia.

**PRESENT:**

**Councilors/Elected Officials**

Johnny Partin, Mayor (Ward 3)  
Rita Joyner, Councilor (Ward 1)  
Michael Harris, Councilor (Ward 2)  
Jasmine E. Gore, Councilor (Ward 4)  
Dominic Holloway, Councilor (Ward 7)

**Staff**

Dr. Concetta Manker, Interim City Manager  
Danielle Ferguson Smith, City Attorney  
Danielle Ferguson Smith, Clerk Pro Tem [pore]

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Partin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The City Attorney served as Clerk pro tempore due to the vacancy in the positions of City Clerk and Deputy City Clerk.

**ROLL CALL**

Roll call was taken by the City Attorney in the order as follows:

Councilor Joyner	-	Present
Councilor Harris	-	Present
Mayor Partin	-	Present
Councilor Gore	-	Present
Councilor Denton	-	Absent
Councilor Pelham	-	Absent
Councilor Holloway	-	Present

Quorum established.

**CLOSED SESSION**

Mayor Partin moved to go into closed session pursuant to Va. Code Section §2.2-3711(A) to discuss and consider business contracts and personnel matters, including board and commission

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appointments; the assignment and performance of specific appointee and employees of City Council; and to the extent such discussion will be aided thereby, (A) (4) for the protection of the privacy of individuals personal matters not related to public business.

The motion was made by Councilor Holloway and seconded by Councilor Joyner. Mayor Partin called for the vote by roll call; the vote resulted:

**Roll Call:**

Mayor Partin	-	Yes
Councilor Joyner	-	Yes
Councilor Harris	-	Yes
Councilor Gore	-	Yes
Councilor Holloway	-	Yes

**Motion Passes: 5-0**

The City Council went into closed session.

**RECONVENE OPEN MEETING**

Due to technical difficulties, the motion to come out of closed meetings was not heard. At the roll call, the vote resulted:

**Roll Call:**

Mayor Partin	-	Yes
Councilor Joyner	-	Yes
Councilor Harris	-	Yes
Councilor Gore	-	Yes
Councilor Denton	-	Yes
Councilor Pelham	-	Yes
Councilor Holloway	-	Yes

**Motion Passes: 7-0**

**CERTIFICATION PURSUANT TO VA. CODE §2.2-3712 (D):** Were only public business matters (1)lawfully exempted from open-meeting requirements and (2) identified in the closed-meeting motion discussed in closed meeting? At the roll call, the responses resulted:

**Roll Call:**

Mayor Partin	-	Yes
Councilor Joyner	-	Yes
Councilor Harris	-	Yes
Councilor Gore	-	Yes
Councilor Denton	-	Yes

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Councilor Pelham - Yes  
Councilor Holloway - Yes

**Motion Passes: 7-0**

Mayor Partin inquired if there was a motion to approve Mr. Phillip Hughes to the Downtown Design Review Committee and Councilors Joyner, Harris, Pelham and Holloway to the Community Development and Block Grant Committee. Motion was made by Councilor Holloway and seconded by Councilor Denton. At the roll call, the vote resulted:

**Roll Call:**

Mayor Partin - Yes  
Councilor Joyner - Yes  
Councilor Harris - Yes  
Councilor Gore - Yes  
Councilor Denton - Yes  
Councilor Pelham - Yes  
Councilor Holloway - Yes

**Motion Passes: 7-0**

Work session was called to order at approximately 7:30p.m.

**WORK SESSION**

**WS-1 Conditional Use Permit Request, 101 S. Main Street** – Chris Ward, presented on the conditional use permit requested from JRT Virginia Properties LLC as it relates to 101 S. Main Street, the former Hopewell Marina Building. JRT Virginia Properties, LLC would like to revitalize the historic building and create mixed use ground floor apartments with commercial space in the front and living space in the back; apartments in the second floor; and a commercial space in the corner. Based on the seven criteria for considerations for conditional use permits, staff and the Planning Commission Board agree to approve the request.

Councilor Denton inquired as to whether the live/work mixed use that is being presented would be against any code currently in place since these are projected to be on the same level (commercial in front and residential in the back) as opposed to the traditional mixed use already in the City of Hopewell (commercial on the ground floor and residential on the second floor). Mr. Ward clarified that the mixed use does not have to be limited to a certain manner and can include the live/work presented by JRT Virginia Properties, LLC.

Councilor Denton voiced a concern on the size of the apartments, as there were 19 apartments total in a 1600 sq. ft. building; further inquiring if there would be 2 bedroom apartments or only single bedroom dwellings. Mr. Ward presented that although it would be smaller sized apartments they are in line with other apartments on the market now being done within historic

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buildings. He further clarified that in order to maintain integrity of these historic properties, build would need to be around walls and columns currently in place.

Councilor Pelham voiced her concern on it being too small for families with children. She further inquired as to whether someone would inspect the pipes of this old building and if there has been any information on whether this is marketable and pricing. Mr. Ward assured that all inspections would need to be done to Code as it relates to pipes in any building and did not have any information as of yet on pricing. He further clarified that the developer would present to City Council on January 24 in order address some of the concerns.

Councilor Joyner indicated that she was in support of the development and voiced that it would appeal to younger generations and change the aesthetic of downtown Hopewell.

Councilor Harris inquired as to the impact the railroad tracks would have on the building as it runs alongside the building. Mr. Ward offered the anticipation of high frequency impact windows being installed to mitigate the movement from the railroad crossing being used and reiterated that details would be discussed with the developer on January 24.

Mayor Partin called the Regular Meeting to begin at approximately 7:50pm. Roll call was taken by the City Attorney in the order as follows:

Councilor Joyner	-	Present
Councilor Harris	-	Present
Mayor Partin	-	Present
Councilor Gore	-	Present
Councilor Denton	-	Not present at the moment
Councilor Pelham	-	Present
Councilor Holloway	-	Present

Quorum established.

**REGULAR MEETING**

Prayer was led by Reverend Tucker followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, led by Councilor Gore.

Mayor Partin called for a motion to adopt or amend the regular meeting agenda. Councilor Holloway moved to adopt the regular meeting agenda. Councilor Pelham seconded his motion. No discussion was heard, at roll call the vote resulted:

**Roll Call:**

Mayor Partin	-	Yes
Councilor Joyner	-	Yes
Councilor Harris	-	Yes

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Councilor Gore	-	Yes
Councilor Denton	-	Not present at the moment
Councilor Pelham	-	Yes
Councilor Holloway	-	Yes

**Motion Passes: 6-0**

Mayor Partin called for a motion to adopt or amend the consent agenda. Councilor Gore called to move item C-7 into work session. Her motion was seconded by Councilor Holloway. No discussion was heard, at roll call the vote resulted:

**Roll Call:**

Mayor Partin	-	No
Councilor Joyner	-	Yes
Councilor Harris	-	Yes
Councilor Gore	-	Yes
Councilor Denton	-	No
Councilor Pelham	-	Yes
Councilor Holloway	-	Yes

**Motion Passes: 5-2**

Councilor Denton made a motion to adopt the amended consent agenda. Councilor Gore seconded her motion. No discussion was heard, at roll call the vote resulted:

**Roll Call:**

Mayor Partin	-	Yes
Councilor Joyner	-	Yes
Councilor Harris	-	Yes
Councilor Gore	-	Yes
Councilor Denton	-	Yes
Councilor Pelham	-	Yes
Councilor Holloway	-	Yes

**Motion Passes: 7-0**

**INFORMATION/PRESENTATIONS**

**Community Crime Update** - Chief Starke provided a snapshot on the uptick in violent crime in the City of Hopewell in the last five years, highlighting that there was also a simultaneous increase in “shots fired incidents” since 2020.

**Finance Report**- Mr. Michael Terry, Finance Director reported that the 2019 financial report is now in the auditors hands for review. He further presented on the projected momentum for which

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the remaining audit years would be completed and that he is awaiting recommendations based on the APA assessment.

**COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS**

Susan Daye (Ward 5) voiced that she heard that Operation Cease Fire is in the works but was wondering why there was no discussion on Operation Bold Blue Line. She indicated that the City needs to send a message and will only be able to convey that message if offenders start going to jail for their actions.

Mayor Partin addressed the constituent and others in this regard indicating that there will be further discussion on this matter later on in the agenda in R-1 with the discussion with Chief Starke.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**UB-1. Appoint the Vice Mayor, in accordance with Chapter IV, Sec 4 (a) of the City Charter.** Mayor Partin opened the floor for nominations for Vice Mayor. Councilor Holloway nominated Councilor Gore for Vice Mayor for the City of Hopewell City Council. Councilor Pelham seconded his nomination. Hearing no other nomination, the floor was closed for a vote. At roll call, the vote resulted:

**Roll Call:**

Mayor Partin	-	Yes
Councilor Joyner	-	Yes
Councilor Harris	-	Yes
Councilor Gore	-	Yes
Councilor Denton	-	No
Councilor Pelham	-	Yes
Councilor Holloway	-	Yes

**Motion Passes: 6-1**

**UB-2- Establish City Council regular meeting dates for 2023.** Councilor Holloway moved to approve the regular meeting dates for 2023. His nomination was seconded by Councilor Pelham. No discussion was heard, at roll call the vote resulted:

**Roll Call:**

Mayor Partin	-	Yes
Councilor Joyner	-	Yes
Councilor Harris	-	Yes
Vice Mayor Gore	-	Yes
Councilor Denton	-	Yes
Councilor Pelham	-	Yes

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Councilor Holloway - Yes

**Motion Passes: 7-0**

**UB-3. Adopt Resolution regarding adverse weather or other emergency conditions.**

Councilor Denton motioned to adopt resolution regarding adverse weather or other emergency conditions. Councilor Pelham seconded her nomination. No discussion was heard, at roll call the vote resulted:

**Roll Call:**

Mayor Partin	-	Yes
Councilor Joyner	-	Yes
Councilor Harris	-	Yes
Vice Mayor Gore	-	Yes
Councilor Denton	-	Yes
Councilor Pelham	-	Yes
Councilor Holloway	-	Yes

**Motion Passes: 6-0**

**REGULAR BUSINESS**

**R-1. Crime Reduction Discussion (Chief Starke).** Chief Starke began speaking on Crime Reduction indicating that he was relieved to see that the citizens of Hopewell have been responsive to the recent surge in crime. He explained that he has a series of initiatives that he would like to focus on in addition to the advancement of technology. He explained that he is in conversation with the City Attorney as they look at changing the pursuit policy and the need for more training as it relates to pursuit protocol. Chief Starke indicated that he would like to have more emphasis on traffic stops and work with probation and parole to implement curfew checks. He stated that he would like to bring more focus on guns, gangs and narcotics as he seeks partnerships with state and federal agencies. In addition he has sought out a DMV grant “Click it or Ticket” and would like to do more command walks and create “Chat and Chew” opportunities to foster community relations. He is seeking local business partnership to have jobs available for graduates of the “Good to Great” program and keep them off the streets. He would also like to start up the Citizens Academy, which is an 8-week program that educates the public on the how and why things are done.

Councilor Joyner requested that Chief Starke address the citizen comment on the Bold Blue Line. Chief Starke explained that the City of Hopewell attended a meeting on the Bold Blue Line initiative but realized when he was there that the City of Hopewell was not identified as locality participant; however, he has made it clear that the City of Hopewell would like to have a “seat at the table”. Councilor Joyner clarified that Bold Line was a part of Operation Cease Fire and reiterated the sentiment that the City of Hopewell was not selected not that the City did not want to participate. Vice Mayor Gore requested that a letter is sent to governor and a copy sent to the state delegate saying that Hopewell would like to be a part of Bold Blue Line.

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Vice Mayor Gore and Councilor Holloway both voiced their support for bringing back community policing and requested that councilmembers are notified when community walks are taking place so that they may also participate. Vice Mayor Gore indicated that is looking into more detailed dates on nuisance laws and arrests with the City Attorney's office and would like to look at the gaps when the data is collected.

Mayor Partin indicated that some constituents voiced a want for curfews to be put into place and requested Chief Starke speak on what a curfew would look like. Chief Starke explained that they would have to decide on the age to include in the curfew and the parameters to draft an ordinance to that effect. He further explained that it would not be successful without full community support. Councilor Pelham indicated that a curfew would not curb a daytime shooting.

**COUNCILOR REQUEST**

**CR-1. Council consider posting for City Finance Director position by Hopewell City Charter Chapter VI, City Clerk and Finance Director (Pelham).** Councilor Pelham would like the City Manager to research what is needed to assist the Finance Director and expressed a need for a City Clerk. Councilor Denton felt that it was not the best time to do so as she felt that we should see what the state suggestions are. There was majority consensus to move forward with this request.

**CR-2. Request the City Manager to develop a list of revenue sources, projected revenue and funds collected throughout the City. Example include Personal Property Tax real Estate Tax, BPOL, Meals/Sales Tax, Sewer/Trash Bill, Fire/Medicaid reimbursement (Gore).** Vice Mayor Gore believes that the request for a list of revenue sources, projected revenue and funds collected would assist in budget projections and assist in the assessments of where gaps in revenue sources are. Interim City Manager, Dr. Manker asked for patience in this request, as there are a number of vacant positions and obtaining that information could be slower than usual. There was a majority consensus to move forward with this request.

**CR-3. Request that the city Manager provides options to City Council to bring sewer/trash billing in-house (Gore).** Mayor Partin interjected to state that this is a discussion already in the works and that it will be a work session item in the next two weeks.

The meeting adjourned at about 9:27 p.m.



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Danielle Ferguson Smith, City Attorney



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Johnny Partin, Mayor