

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL HELD JUNE 20, 2019

A Special Meeting of Hopewell City Council was held Thursday, June 20, 2019, at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, Municipal Building, and 300 North Main Street, Hopewell, Virginia.

PRESENT: Jasmine E. Gore, Mayor, Ward 4
Patience Bennett, Vice Mayor, Ward 7
Deborah Randolph, Councilor, Ward 1
Arlene Holloway, Councilor, Ward 2
John B. Partin, Jr., Councilor, Ward 3
Janice Denton, Councilor, Ward 5
Brenda Pelham, Councilor, Ward 6 (arrived at 6:31 p.m.)

Ronnieye L. Arrington, City Clerk
Debra McKnight, Assistant City Clerk
Stefan Calos, Sands Anderson PC, City Attorney

ABSENT: John M. Altman, Jr., City Manager

ROLL CALL

Mayor Gore opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Roll call was taken as follows:

Councilor Randolph	-	present
Mayor Gore	-	present
Vice Mayor Bennett	-	present
Councilor Partin	-	present
Councilor Holloway	-	present
Councilor Denton	-	present
Councilor Pelham	-	absent (arrived at 6:31 p.m.)

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:31 p.m. Councilor Partin moved go into closed meeting for **discussion and consideration of specific appointees of city council (boards, commissions, authorities*)**; in accordance with Virginia Code § 2.2-3711 (A) (2). His motion was seconded by Councilor Denton. Upon the roll call, the vote resulted:

Councilor Randolph	-	yes
Councilor Holloway	-	yes
Councilor Partin	-	yes
Mayor Gore	-	yes
Councilor Denton	-	yes
Councilor Pelham	-	yes
Vice Mayor Bennett		yes

Motion passed 7-0

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RECONVENE OPEN MEETING

Council convened into Open Session at 8:03 p.m. and responded to the question pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2-3712 (D): were only public business matters (I) lawfully exempted from open-meeting requirements and (II) identified in the closed-meeting motion discussed in closed meeting? Upon the roll call, the vote resulted:

Councilor Randolph	-	yes
Councilor Holloway	-	yes
Councilor Partin	-	yes
Mayor Gore	-	yes
Councilor Denton	-	yes
Councilor Pelham	-	yes
Vice Mayor Bennett		yes

APPOINTMENTS

Councilor Partin moved to appoint Councilors Pelham and Denton to the Ashford Civic Plaza Committee, as well as Martin Mitchell of Ward 3. Councilor Denton seconded his motion. Upon the roll call, the vote resulted:

Councilor Randolph	-	yes
Councilor Holloway	-	yes
Councilor Partin	-	yes
Mayor Gore	-	yes
Councilor Denton	-	yes
Councilor Pelham	-	yes
Vice Mayor Bennett		yes

Motion passed 7-0

Councilor Partin moved to appoint Patrice Gilliam, Kathleen Vincent, and Rita Joyner to the Architectural Review Board; Jesse Spruill, Jr., to the Board of Zoning Appeals; Ed Pappas to Friends of the Lower Appomattox River; Craig Gilkison, Anthony Zevgolis and Johnny Shelton to the Dock Commission; Ed Pappas, Queniece Miles, Lorraine Goff and Herbert Townes to Keep Hopewell Beautiful; Fara Jenkins to the Planning Commission; Wendy Lynch and Sean Shearin to the Recreation Commission; Queniece Miles to the Transportation Safety Board; Thomas Wagstaff to the Economic Development Authority; and Christopher Reber to the School Board. Councilor Denton seconded his motion. Upon the roll call, the vote resulted:

Councilor Randolph	-	yes
Councilor Holloway	-	yes
Councilor Partin	-	yes
Mayor Gore	-	yes
Councilor Denton	-	yes
Councilor Pelham	-	yes
Vice Mayor Bennett		yes

Motion passed 7-0

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Councilor Partin submitted a Transactional Disclosure Statement stating that Mr. Wagstaff was his campaign treasurer, but that he was able to participate fairly, objectively and in the public interest.

Councilor Pelham submitted a Transactional Disclosure Statement stating that she was a School Board employee, but that she was able to participate fairly, objectively and in the public interest.

DISCUSSION WITH TREASURER

At 8:13 p.m., Joan Gosier, Hopewell City Treasurer came before Council to discuss the issues relating to the errors in the Real Estate tax bills. Mr. Partin introduced the item by noting that Councilor Randolph has suggested this discussion after he called this special meeting, and so he added it to be discussed. Mayor Gore asked Council if they would prefer to hear the entire presentation from Ms. Gosier and then ask questions, or did it prefer to ask questions as they went along. Council chose the latter.

Ms. Gosier acknowledged the presence of her staff and then began to explain the process for how tax bills are distributed. She spoke about the testing that is required prior to issuing a tax bill, but noted that (in hindsight), she did the percentage of tests but not the diversity of testing. Amanda Kidd, Chief Deputy of the Commissioner of Revenue's office was also present and fielded questions from Council. Ms. Gosier noted that any citizen who overpaid their taxes based on the incorrect bill should have already been issued a refund, and steps had been taken to ensure this did not happen again.

Ms. Gosier announced the release of software that would allow the citizens to view real estate information. She said that although the system was designed to provide citizens information on their own property, but if someone knew the parcel ID number, they could also view other properties. Mayor Gore expressed concern and asked Ms. Gosier to modify the program so that a person could only view their own information.

ADJOURN

Pursuant to Council Rules, the meeting ended at 9:30 p.m.

/s/ Jasmine E. Gore
Jasmine E. Gore, Mayor

/s/ Ronniye L. Arrington
Ronniye L. Arrington, City Clerk