

March 31, 2015
Regular Meeting

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL HELD MARCH 31, 2015

A Special Meeting of the City Council of the City of Hopewell, Virginia, was held Tuesday, March 31, 2015, at 6:33 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, Municipal Building, 300 North Main Street, Hopewell, Virginia.

PRESENT: Brenda S. Pelham, Mayor
Christina J. Luman-Bailey, Vice Mayor
Anthony J. Zevgolis, Councilor
Jasmine E. Gore, Councilor
Jasmine E. Gore, Councilor
K. Wayne Walton, Councilor
Jackie M. Shornak, Councilor

Mark A. Haley, City Manager
Thomas Lacheney, City Attorney
Cynthia Y Ames, City Clerk

ABSENT: Arlene Holloway, Councilor (out of town)

ROLL CALL

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

Mayor Pelham	-	present
Vice Mayor Luman-Bailey	-	present
Councilor Holloway	-	present
Councilor Zevgolis	-	ABSENT (arrived 6:34 p.m.)
Councilor Gore	-	present
Councilor Walton	-	present
Councilor Shornak	-	present

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:30 p.m. motion was made by Councilor Walton, and seconded by Vice Mayor Luman-Bailey, to resolve to go into closed session for two (2) matters concerning the discussion or consideration of specific city employees; consultation with legal counsel pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body; and consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel in accordance with Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1)&(7). Upon the roll call, the vote resulted:

Vice Mayor Luman-Bailey	-	yes
Councilor Gore	-	yes
Councilor Walton	-	yes
Mayor Pelham	-	yes
Councilor Shornak	-	yes

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OPEN MEETING

At 7:30 p.m. Council convened into Open Session. Councilors responded to the question: “Were the only matters discussed in the Closed Meeting public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements; and public business matters identified in the motion to convene into Closed Session?” Upon the roll call, the vote resulted:

Vice Mayor Luman-Bailey	-	yes
Councilor Zevgolis	-	yes
Councilor Gore	-	yes
Councilor Walton	-	yes
Mayor Pelham	-	yes
Councilor Shornak	-	yes

SPECIAL MEETING

ROLL CALL

At 7:32 p.m. Mayor Pelham called the roll call:

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

Prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PH-1. PUBLIC HEARING – PROPOSED TAX RATES 2015

This was the night advertised for a public hearing on the proposed tax rates for FY 2015. The City of Hopewell proposes to adopt a high tax rate of \$1.13 per \$100 of assessed value to offset the decreased assessment. The “effective tax rate” increase is \$-0- per \$100 or -0- percent increase. The proposed rate will yield approximately the same total amount of real estate tax revenue as last year, when multiplied by the new total assessed value excluding additional assessments due to new construction or improvements to property. Whereby, the overall total revenue may net out to a zero or minimal increase/decrease from the year before, taxpayers individually may pay more or less taxes depending the assessment (value) change in their particular property.

The public hearing was opened at 7:34 p.m.

Charles Lewis, Ward 4, was opposed to the proposed tax increase.

Jerry Williams, Ward 5, felt there was not enough money for the communication system. Hopewell is losing its population.

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Ann Williams, Ward 5, the City of Hopewell ranked fourth from the lowest in the health Ranking Report there is a high percentage of smoking, obesity, and children living in poverty in the City.

There being no other speakers, the public hearing was closed at 7:51 p.m.

Motion was made by Councilor Zevgolis, and seconded by Councilor Gore to resolve to postpone the vote until the second Tuesday in April, the 14th, on the tax rate. Upon the roll call, the vote resulted:

Vice Mayor Luman-Bailey	-	yes
Councilor Zevgolis	-	yes
Councilor Gore	-	yes
Councilor Walton	-	NO
Mayor Pelham	-	yes
Councilor Shornak	-	NO

The motion passed, four yes/two no.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

UB-1. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – HEALTH INSURANCE 2015-2016 RATES

At this time every year, the City looks at the renewal rates from the health insurance carrier. For the upcoming FY2015/2016, CIGNA projected a substantial rate increase. Although CIGNA is a great partner and provider, the City could not absorb nor pass on that rate increase that is projected. Therefore, staff recommended pursuing the quote that was obtained from The Local Choice (TLC). TLC is a program that is managed by the Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of human Resource management (DHRM). TLC will offer:

- Competitive rates;
- Below-industry average rate adjustments/increases;
- Benefits that are compliant with the ACA requirements;
- Value-added features unequaled by the private sector; and
- Protection against catastrophic claims through shared risk pools, financial stability, and access to the same statewide and regional provider networks available to state employees.

TLC currently has over 300 local employer groups and covers more than 50,000 employees, retirees and dependents. TLC's plan offerings closely align with the City's current offerings. Lastly, TLC came in with a substantially reduced rate for the upcoming Fiscal Year. That means that the employees and the City will see a decrease in providing health care coverage for FY2015/2016.

Motion was made by Councilor Walton, and seconded by Councilor Shornak, to resolve to approve health insurance rates for FY2015/2016 and to authorize the City Manager to sign the contract with The Local Choice (TLC). Upon the roll call, the vote resulted:

Vice Mayor Luman-Bailey	-	yes
Councilor Zevgolis	-	yes
Councilor Gore	-	yes
Councilor Walton	-	yes
Mayor Pelham	-	yes
Councilor Shornak	-	yes

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Councilor Shornak submitted a Transactional Disclosure Statement. Her daughter is employed by the City of Hopewell.

REGULAR BUSINESS

R-1. REGULAR BUSINESS – CITY MANAGER’S BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016

City Manager Haley presented the Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-2016 (filed in the City Clerk’s Office).

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

Councilor Zevgolis reported that the green trash cans throughout the City have a bad smell.

Mayor Pelham announced the John Randolph Foundation meeting at 5:45 p.m. on April 1, 2015 at the Youth Initiative.

Vice Mayor Luman-Bailey announced the Lincoln activity at City Point this Saturday.

ADJOURN

Motion was made by Councilor Walton, seconded by Councilor Gore, and unanimously passed to adjourn the meeting.

/s/ Brenda S. Pelham
Brenda S. Pelham, Mayor

Cynthia Y. Ames, City Clerk