

MINUTES OF THE March 28, 2024 CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

A SPECIAL meeting of the Hopewell City Council was held on Thursday March 28, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: John B. Partin, Mayor
Jasmine Gore, Vice Mayor
Rita Joyner, Councilor
Michael Harris, Councilor (Virtual)
Janice Denton, Councilor
Brenda Pelham, Councilor (6:04)
Dominic Holloway, Councilor

Councilor Holloway makes a motion to allow Councilor Harris to participate remotely, Mayor Partin seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL	Councilor Joyner-	Yes
	Councilor Harris-	Abstain
	Mayor Partin-	Yes
	Vice Mayor Gore-	Yes
	Councilor Denton-	Yes
	Councilor Pelham-	Absent
	Councilor Holloway-	Yes

Motion Passes 5-0

Mayor Partin gives Dr. Manker the floor to explain what the meeting is about. She explains tonight's meeting will be for department budget requests, and goes over

what is in the books that were provided to each of the council. Dr. Manker goes over the budget calendar and states after today, April 9 the proposed budget presentation will be discussed, and she went over a few other dates. Dr. Manker begins department budgets beginning with city clerk, however, the City Clerk was having technical difficulties so they moved on to the Circuit Clerk. Circuit Clerk did not have any requests so there was no presentation. City Attorney states she is not asking for any additional funds and opens the floor for any questions.

City Manager presents next and states she is requesting \$470,000.00 and gives a breakdown of those requests of page 3 of her presentation. She gives further details of the costs and the reasons for the requests and why she needs that amount. Councilor Holloway asks Dr. Manker what legislative services she was referring to. Dr. Manker responds to his question explaining where it came from. Further discussion took place with council and Dr. Manker. Vice Mayor Gore speaks to the requests stating other jurisdictions have people lobbying for them to get the grants they receive, whereas Hopewell does not have that, in which case people need to support the ask of Hopewell more to see the difference in the city. Councilor Pelham asks about the full time salaries that are included, Dr. Manker states it is her salary, the executive assistant and the assistant city manager. Councilor Pelham asks does the assistant city manager funds go back to general funds, the answer is yes. She then asks about the phone stipend for the city employees. Further discussion was had in regard to the phone stipend.

City Clerk presents her budget giving a total increase of \$21,000.00. Mrs. Williams based her quotes off of last year's budget and necessary funds going forward. She then discusses the furniture requirement for the deputy clerk's office for small repairs. Advertisements were discussed with council and agreed to discuss that at the following year due to not having an accurate number to determine what will be required. Vice Mayor Gore asks about the ads asking why are we changing the clerk duties to allow the clerk's office to do the ad budgets. The answer is given to state it is to the invoices only, not to do the actual ad. Further discussion took place in reference to the ad invoices and the responsibility of who should be addressing the invoices. Councilor Holloway asks about the ads as well stating last year they made the decision that departments would handle their own ads and fees. The concern was it would change the duties of the clerk's office because the clerk duties have already been increased. Mayor Partin states if it works and helps streamline and department heads are ok with it, he has no issue moving it over to the city clerk's office, he then asks about the furniture and stated was a work order

put in place and then asked did we look into the school system with the surplus to see if they had any furniture to give away. Councilor Joyner asks if we doing it next year, is the \$10,000.00 the correct number, Mrs. Williams responded stated it wouldn't be considered because that amount is not enough to cover all departments. The result is to keep it at \$6500 for the FY of 25. Councilor Pelham asks about the service contracts and Dr. Manker stated everyone was not prepared to discuss that portion of the budget, directors were to discuss just their increases for the next year tonight. Councilor Pelham believes directors should have been prepared to discuss it because it is part of their budget. Vice Mayor Gore wants to circle back to legislative positions, advertisements, service contract requests, and the recording of the video for each meeting. Currently there is no contract for it to be done, but the payment for that contract will come out of the service contracts of the city clerk's budget. Councilor Denton asks to be sure this is not the final budget, there will be a final budget later and if they feel what they have cannot be sustainable they have an opportunity to not accept requests. She asks Russ to be sure if there are any changes they will be made at the final budget presentation.

Commission of Revenue, Dr. Manker stated they made no changes, Councilor Holloway stated based on what was presented, they are asking for \$20,000.00 for furniture, Dr. Manker stated every year she is asking for expansion of her office due to the amount of traffic she receives, one of the major concerns was people in wheel chairs could not access the office adequately. Councilor Holloway made further comments but appeared his mic was not on and could not hear his response. Mayor Partin asks is there a forecast that if the office is more accessible it would help make the city more money, Dr. Manker stated that was not presented to her. Vice Mayor Gore asked are these requests in the draft budget, the answer is yes it is currently in there.

Mr. Newman presents his requests, stated he is asking for \$3000.00 to increase the shredding fees that they utilize, and the increase in the station printer service. He goes over the last page of his presentation and shows the difference in what he is requesting. He states victim witness is not asking for anything further. Councilor Pelham asks do they use the same shredding company as the city, Mr. Newman stated yes, Councilor Pelham asks was there a contract, Mr. Newman states they just call when they need it, Dr. Manker states it comes out of their budget to pay, Dr. Manker stated she will look into getting a contract.

Commutations and Government Affairs presents her budget request to council for \$9,138.10 for service contracts and advertisements within the city. She gives detail on what they ads will be for and what would be included. She states they also ask for travel, education, and meals for an increase of \$7,863.00. For dues and memberships, she is asking for an increase of \$3,300.00 to join associations to keep up to the date with current resources. She opens the floor for questions. Vice Mayor Gore asks how did she come up with the total number increase because the numbers were not making sense to her. Further conversation took place with council and Ms. Ginger with the numbers provided to ensure the numbers are correct for the correct ask. Councilor Pelham asks is there a raise be given to the communications persons, Dr. Manker stated the 2.5 percent is estimated in everyone's budget.

Ms. Brown with CSA – Dr. Manker stated she provided council with a request from the state of 4.1 billion dollars for a bill back service for all individual or kids that she supports. She has not asked for an increase in operational funds but provided a total in funds she received from the state. Councilor Pelham asks does the money come back to the city from the state, Dr. Manker stated yes.

Developmental Planning with Chris Ward, Mr. Ward presents his presentation to council with a quick background stated it is divided into 4 divisions and he gives that break down to council. He asks for \$122,667.31 to include salary, without salary it is \$37,159.92. He goes through his presentation with council to discuss the purpose of his asks. Mr. Ward gives a quick brief detailed presentation of why his total increase is what it is. He then opens the floor for council to ask any questions. Vice Mayor Gore asks is there any other reductions in his budget, he stated no, this amount is all increase. Mr. Ward discusses his CIP requests of \$132,000.00 over two years. Mr. Ward looked in preexisting contract to find savings, he had 12,000 worth of savings to put towards the contracts for ordinance updates. The second CIP request is to implement the city's way funding program. Further conversation takes place with council and Mr. Ward.

Mr. Bennett with economic development, he begins his presentation with a brief description of how things were when he stepped into this role. He zeroed in on priorities to determine what they needed the most and what would benefit the city. He requested increase for investment, he shows a slide show of the city and the mission statement. He goes over the first line item in the budget which is marketing that he wishes to increase. He explains to council why that increase is

important for the city. He is asking for \$25,000.00 but he intends to take money from regional group and keep it in Hopewell. The second line item is a new program under tourism the operation of Hopewell ice rink, he is asking for an increase of \$18,000.00. His third line for increase is for enterprise zone, he is asking for a total increase of \$276,000.00. The final line item in the budget is legal services, he is asking for an increase of \$30,000.00. He is asking for an increase in his budget for taking over the Marina to increase from \$25,000 to \$100,000 a year, but there will be a \$75,000-dollar increase in revenue. Mr. Bennett opens the floor for any questions. Councilor Pelham asks has he spoken with the city attorney about the projects, he answered yes and they have been in discussion and he has had assistance in the past. Vice Mayor Gore states she cannot support 30,000 to his budget for legal because it should go through the city attorney. Dr. Manker stated the reason for that line item is because finance entered in codes based on the activity of the department and because economic deals with a lot of real estate the legal item was placed there to easily handle real estate transactions. Vice Mayor Gore states it should be written differently because the way it is currently written; it is a legal matter. Council had further conversation in regard to the budget and increases.

Finance with Mr. Branson, he begins with the basic fanatical office and procurement, he asked for additional money for training. \$15,500.00. He mentions he has found an interim assessor who should be starting in a few weeks. The old assessor had a request in for 300,000 for an outside contractor, but because there is now an interim assessor, he will take away that 300,000 requests. He stated there are reductions in travel as well, so the net increase would only be the \$15,500. Mr. Branson opens the floor for questions from Council.

Fire with Chief Ruppert, he begins his presentation stating they have requested assistance from Fort Gregg Adams for assistance in putting a fire out. He said he planned on requesting 6 additional positions to allow for the ambulance trucks in the station to be utilized 24 hours a day. The total for that increase would be \$417,000.00. He mentions there is a safer grant that will partially fund those positions for 3 years. He stated due to current financial restraints he is not requesting those this year. He mentions one station is 100 years old and one is 75 years old this coming year. He stated if their vehicles are not operating they cannot put out fires. He stated as far as capital he is asking for a replacement of their boat, which was custom built and is currently falling apart. He mentioned because it is custom made no one is willing to work on it. He is looking at \$332,000 for a

replacement of the boat. He stated they applied for a grant for equipment and got \$80,000 which leaves them with \$252,000. He got a quote to lease the product over 7 years at 44,302.00 a year, but would be a recurring request for the next 7 years. His operation request is a total of \$189,000.00 approximately. He goes through his presentation to discuss what that total increase will cover to include SOP's and SOG's. He asked for \$10,000 for mental health services to assist with employees. He asked for \$20,000.00 for equipment maintenance. He mentions the FDA has started enforcing that they will no longer be able to exchange drug boxes with the hospital, and they will have to purchase their own drugs. He is asking for \$80,000.00 for equipment and to purchase the drugs necessary. Hose and radio repair was the final request to council, the increase for this was \$12,500.00. He opens the floor for any questions. Vice Mayor Gore gives reminder to city manager to send contract out about the boat to council. Further discussion takes place between council and Chief Ruppert.

Healthy Families presents to council their asks for the FY 25 after giving a brief summary of who they are and what they have accomplished in the city over the past year. They gave a brief description of what they offer to citizens of Hopewell, and events that they offer for all to attend. They state their grants have increased, the VDSS grant went up to 24,000 and the VDH grant went up to 49,000. Their budget increase ask is 77,000, with the grants they are only asking for \$4072.00. They plan to spend the funding with management consultants, special speakers, therapeutic options for the families, the rent for the new location, and to conduct in home visitation some will go to the vehicles. They open the floor for council to ask questions. Vice Mayor Gore asked what is the \$4000 increase, the answer was it is the net increase. Further discussion took place between council and presenters.

HR Director Ms. Yaosca begins her presentation by letting council know her asks are straight forward and she only has three. The first is \$1800.00, the second is \$3000 in office supplies and the third one is \$200,000.00 for the comp study recommended from the Bob Group. Mayor Partin recommends with the comp study he ask for an implantation plan that is realistic and the city of Hopewell can financially afford. Vice Mayor Gore states council gave clear instruction last time they did a classic comp study, and when it was last chartered they gave specific instruction of what council wanted. She mentions they did not get anything they asked for before, so they hesitation will come from that. Councilor Pelham asks is there a way to get a time line of when they will present the HR manual, Dr.

Manker steps in to say they decided to set up a committee to talk about it at the next meeting. Further conversation takes place between council and Ms. Yaosca.

IT with Mr. Jay speaks in reference to his asks for his department. He begins his presentation by skipping through his presentation to page 4. He begins with his service contract letting council know they are adding contract management and bid managers which is an increase of 26 percent. Tyler in-code has increased to 10 percent. Their surveillance system is increasing due to adding further cameras, they are asking for an increase of \$25000 for service costs. The WIFI access points are scattered through-out the city, they need to include it in the budget which is \$7500.00. For the service line items, the total ask is \$93,972.00. The telephone, fax, video line item increase ask is \$7438.00. For training they are asking for \$12,650.00 to cover training. Total operation budget is \$114,060.00. For capital projects they have network course for switches, they have a 5-year life span, they are coming end of service and by 2025 parts will no longer be available, he is asking for replacement which is \$107,100.00. His next capital project is his host servers, they have 8 and 4 have reached end of life and need replaced, the ask is \$132,000.00. The third CIP is Microsoft office, he mentions the current version is 2016, office 2021 or office 365 is available. He is asking for \$210,000.00 or consider moving to office 365 at a yearly cost which is to be determined. His final CIP is print manage solution, there are over 100 printers in the city, his ask for this is \$36,750.00. He opens the floor for questions of council. Councilor Joyner asks IT about the current website and how it serves the city, she states it is not very functional and updating boards and commissions is impossible to do. Mr. Jay answers the question stating it is an ongoing task.

Councilor Joyner makes a motion to extend the meeting until completion of departments, Mayor Partin seconds the motion.

ROLL CALL

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

Motion Passes 7-0

Councilor Pelham asks IT could the directors if they are on a particular commission to contact the person who does the website to have it updated, she asks is that hard to do. Mr. Jay states it is not hard to do; it would just need to be coordinated. Vice Mayor Gore asks what is the Net asks, he mentions for operation it is \$114,000.00, for Capital his total is \$485,000.00.

Police speaks to what they are asking for; Ms. Parson begins with page 4 of their presentation asking for \$1,120,284,000.00. This is itemized by department code that is divided into 7 departments. She goes through each of these departments with the different requests. Most of the increases are in service accounts, for modules and software systems to facilitate to the work that police and dispatch does on a daily basis. They have 34 cameras and the ask to maintain them are \$90,000 increase in addition to sim card which is \$36 a month per camera which is \$5100.00. They have asked for \$1000 addition in training dollars for admin support staff. She goes further into each department with the added expenses with a detailed description for the million dollar ask. She discusses overtime expenses to cover vacancies fields to maintain minimum staffing. She then goes over the requirements for new recruits and what that bill is, and explains why there is an increase in that area. Chief Taylor adds the update on patrol over time cost stating they have budgeted \$377,00.00 for the last 5 years, and they requested to go up to \$600,00.00, but since discussed they have gone back to the original amount, so there will be a decrease of \$240,00.00 and those funds will be given back due to the vacancies. Councilor Holloway asks had the sign on bonuses already been approved, Dr. Manker steps in to answer the question to say no they have not.

DSS with Ms. Williams begins her presentation stating her budget is a decrease of almost \$13,000.00. She states last year more local funding was requested than they needed this year, so for local funding she is asking for \$14,172.00. She mentions it is a decrease because of staff who have left who retired out with higher salaries. No questions were asked.

Public works with Mr. Michael Campbell begins his presentation with his requests. He starts with travel, public transportation, meals, lodging in the amount of

\$12,400.00. He mentions this is due to the amount of new staff since he has come on board. The service contracts, repair maintenance, and supplies ask is \$88,000.00. He mentions the traffic signals are aging out and can't find the parts, and the price of everything has gone up. Fleet is \$30,000.00, he mentions the school bus repairs comes out of their budget. Management consultant services ask is \$68,000.00 in reference to the bridges. He states they just finished the inspection last month. He goes through in detail the remaining asks that he has mentioning they are self-explanatory. He mentions public works will have about 60 million in requests out for projects. That request is 100 percent reimbursable. He mentions he is asking for 20 grand for the proper software to track all information for the cemetery, with added benefits that he presents from his presentation to council. He goes over the equipment that they use and he mentions no one goes anywhere without their roads being done. He presents a 25-year-old dump truck that relies on the most to push snow or anything else necessary, that truck's condition is bad and straps have had to be fabricated because they cannot be bought. He is requesting 3.9 million in local funds in UPC projects that he mentions need to be funded. He asks council to take a good look at the remainder of the requests in his presentation for consideration. He opens the floor for questions. Vice Mayor Gore asks about the trash doors and Mr. Campbell gave a very brief explanation for this. Vice Mayor Gore asks about the cemeteries to make a point for Mr. Campbell to come back to explain what his current vision is for expansion. Vice Mayor asks what are the biggest vendors that the city pays annually because she wants to know are there valid contracts and have they been bided properly. Further discussion takes place with council and Mr. Campbell. Mr. Marshall gets up to address council to explain to them about specific designs that are currently being done.

Parks and Recreation with Ms. Tabitha begins her presentation by stating she oversees 6 divisions within her department. She jumps to page 5 for operating budget she is asking for \$92,000.00, she is looking to invent temporary health services they are asking for an increase of \$57,000.00 to have two firework shows in the same fiscal year. The shows will cost an estimate of \$42,000.00. Full athletics is asking for \$20,000.00, which will allow the kids if they continue to go to a championship in which they can travel outside of state. It will cover lodging to avoid coming in front of council for each requests. Park, repair and maintenance supplies Ms. Martinez is asking for an increase of \$5000 to cover the river walk phase 1 replacement. Temporary health services for athletics she would like to increase that to \$10,000. The big request she has is to increase the wages, she gives

two options, first being \$153,020.71, this will help to bring up wages of all part time staff. The next option is \$96,586.00 which will bring the wage up to 13.50 per hour. For her one-time capital increase, she is asking for \$128,000.00, \$22,000 of that amount will be for asset tracking software. The other request is \$31,000.00 for the Hopewell Community Center Marquee, she states the software is outdated and not repairable. The master plan request is \$75,000.00 to make sure they are in tune with their community, get a master plan set as well. For CIP they have the Hopewell center HVAC, which there are 10 units to operate the centers. The issue needs to be fixed because of heat exhaustion from staff during the summer, if the inside temperature is higher than outside they will have to close the pool. 3.5 street renovation is \$125. The riverwalk and phase 3 there is an estimate of 1.480 million quote to help with it. Personnel request is the summer program staff; she is asking for \$30,000.00 for the summer camp. She would like to continue to offer summer camps to pay part time workers to maintain the camp. She opens the floor for questions. Councilor Joyner speaks to the pool stating it is a huge concern, and missing great opportunities. She mentions the RVA swim wants to present to city council within the next few weeks. She also mentions the lifeguard training. Ms. Martinez speaks to that training. Vice Mayor Gore states she would like to know how many kids are currently using the program and using the center. Council and Ms. Martinez have further conversation in reference to minimum wage and the requirements. Mayor Partin also speaks to the greatness of having an indoor pool and he has to go to YMCA in Petersburg to do his swim training.

Waste Water Mr. Dickie speaks in reference to his asks. He highlights Hopewell water renewal as a complex major municipal waste water treatment facility in the state of Virginia, he highlights maintaining the goal of having 100 percent compliance with no violations. Fund 32 he has facility and sewer funds. For facility he needs 4.4 million dollars. He mentions the majority are inflation area increases, previous budgets have remained flat, and he now wants to present a realistic budget of what they will need next year. The maintenance they have equipment upkeep, and if the repair is cheaper or more than replacing it completely. He mentions overhead there are a lot of contracts and looking to work with finance and getting cooperate procurement with vendors to get the best prices they can get. Fund 41 they need 2.2 million, for a lot of aging infrastructure underneath the roads, keep it flowing downhill and to the river. He wants to purchase new generators for pump stations for emergency backup power. His Capital request is \$9.2 million with a list of 13 projects that are ongoing and be

moved into next fiscal year's capital budget. His last slide is the 13 projects that he needs the funds for, he does not go into detail. He opens the floor for questions. Vice Mayor Gore asks are any of the funds about the Dewberry project. Mr. Dickie responds to the question stating yes. Dr. Manker steps in to give further understanding of this question. Council and Mr. Dickie have further conversation in reference to the Dewberry Study. Mayor Partin highlights that they definitely do the second gravity thickener rehab.

Councilor Denton makes a motion to adjourn.

Yes: 6

No: 0

Respectfully Submitted,



Brittani Williams, City Clerk



Johnny Partin, Mayor