

**April 13, 2021**  
**Regular City Council Meeting**

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL HELD APRIL 13, 2021**

An Electronic (Zoom) Meeting of the City Council of the City of Hopewell, Virginia, was held Tuesday, April 13, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. to discuss the continuation of the Francisco Landing Contract.

Mayor Bennett opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. Roll call was taken as follows:

PRESENT:       Patience A. Bennett, Mayor, Ward 7  
                  John B. Partin, Jr., Vice Mayor, Ward 3  
                  Deborah Randolph, Councilor, Ward 1  
                  Arlene Holloway, Councilor, Ward 2  
                  Janice B. Denton, Councilor, Ward 5  
                  Brenda S. Pelham, Councilor, Ward 6

ABSENT:        Jasmine E. Gore, Councilor, Ward 4

STAFF           John March Altman, Jr., City Manager  
                  Sandra Robinson, City Attorney  
                  Charles E. Dane, Assistant City Manager  
                  Mollie P. Bess, Interim City Clerk

**CLOSED MEETING**

SUGGESTED MOTION: Move to go into closed meeting pursuant to Va. Code Sections 2.2- 3711 (A)(!) to discuss and consider personnel matters, including the recruitment and appointment of a City Clerk; and to the extent these discussions will be aided thereby, (A)(4) for the protection of the privacy of individuals in personal matters not related to public business.

Motion was made by Vice Mayor Partin and seconded by Councilor Pelham

ROLL CALL:

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

Councilor Gore joined shortly after Closed Session started.

**RECONVENE OPEN MEETING**

Motion made to come out of closed session by Vice Mayor Partin and seconded by Councilor Pelham.

ROLL CALL:

Councilor Denton	no answer
Councilor Pelham	yes
Mayor Bennett	yes
Councilor Randolph	yes
Councilor Holloway	yes
Vice Mayor Partin	yes

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Councilor Gore	yes arrived late
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**CERTIFICATION**

CERTIFICATION PURSUANT TO VIRGINIA 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?

ROLL CALL:

Councilor Denton	yes
Councilor Pelahm	yes
Mayor Bennett	yes
Councilor Randolph	yes
Councilor Holloway	yes
Vice Mayor Partin	yes
Councilor Gore	yes

Motion made by Vice Mayor Paitin and seconded by Councilor Pelham for Council to appoint Ms. Mollie Bess as Acting City Clerk.

ROLL CALL:

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

**WORK SESSION**

**City Council's Boards and Commissions** – Councilor Gore - Goal is to have council review boards and commissions list, clean it up and make sure all boards/commissions are still relevant, active and have been updated with current information. Also to finish project started with the website committee so that vacancies and members can be posted on the website. Need to finalize what is on city's website. Need to think about why we have these boards and do they serve a purpose, do we need to think about redesigning or getting rid of. Look at doing active advertising to solicit applications, Need to work on a marketing plan. Goal to take everyone's feedback and meet again in a work session. Ms. Bess is preparing a document that she will share with City Council on what she has prepared for city council's review of her scrub. Will plan the next work session for May 25, 2021 and the goal is for every member of city council who wishes to participate to review the Boards and Commissions list to see 1) which boards they feel like we can do without, 2) to see if in their opinion based on their research and what is provided if a Board and Commissions can be adjusted, 3) to see if there is an opportunity to establish a new board, meaning each individual member of council if you have a board which you think would be beneficial to the City of Hopewell to share that during the work session 4) to review a draft flyer to see if council would like to support using that as a template to advertise to share with the public and you will be able to see Ms. Bess' scrub at the meeting. Councilor Gore will add this to the Consent Agenda.

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Motion made by Councilor Gore and seconded by Mayor Bennett for Council to have a tentative work session on May 25 to discuss Boards and Commissions

**ROLL CALL:**

Councilor Denton	no
Councilor Pelham	yes
Mayor Bennett	yes
Councilor Randolph	no
Councilor Holloway	yes
Vice Mayor Partin	yes
Councilor Gore	yes

Motion Passes: 6 – 1

**OPEN MEETING**

Mayor Bennett opened the meeting and welcomed guest. The prayer was led by Charles Dane, Assistant City Manager, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, led by Councilor Pelham.

**ROLL CALL:**

Councilor Denton	present
Councilor Pelham	present
Mayor Bennett	present
Councilor Randolph	present
Councilor Holloway	present
Vice Mayor Partin	present
Councilor Gore	present

**AGENDA**

Motion made by Vice Mayor Partin and seconded Councilor Pelham by to adopt an amended agenda that has a discussion of the previous Virginia American Water outage under the info11nation/presentation section.

**ROLL CALL**

Councilor Denton	no
Councilor Pelham	yes
Mayor Bennett	yes
Councilor Randolph	yes
Councilor Holloway	yes
Vice Mayor Partin	yes
Councilor Gore	yes

Motion Passes: 6 - 1

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion made by Vice Mayor Partin and seconded Councilor Pelham by to adopt the consent agenda.

**ROLL CALL**

Councilor Denton	yes
Councilor Pelham	yes

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Mayor Bennett	yes
Councilor Randolph	yes
Councilor Holloway	yes
Vice Mayor Partin	yes
Councilor Gore	yes

Motion Passes: 7 - 0

Mayor Bennett turned the meeting over to Vice Mayor Partin since the motion for an amended agenda passed City Council vote. This would be under Information/Presentations.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Partin and seconded by Councilor Gore to direct the City Manager and the City Attorney to work together to research and make an oral report back to City Council at the April 27<sup>th</sup> meeting regarding the legal and business options available to the City of Hopewell to compel accountability on Virginia American Water for the water outage that occurred here in Hopewell back in mid-February.

Councilor Gore wanted to go on record as saying that "there were three items that follow-up had been requested on and is still needed 1) could credit be provided; 2) what happened with the \$800,000 that was provided to the City and 3) a report out on communication, why didn't they correct the media report that was sent to the public."

**ROLL CALL**

Councilor Denton	no
Councilor Pelham	yes
Mayor Bennett	yes
Councilor Randolph	no
Councilor Holloway	yes
Vice Mayor Partin	yes
Councilor Gore	yes

Motion Passes: 5 - 2

**R-1 - The Local Choice (TLC) Annual Health Insurance Renewal**

A summary is that TLC's renewal is a 2.2% increase and New Hire Eligibility Effective Date Change

There are two renewal considerations and they are 1) Same benefits -hold employee contributions flat and 2) Eliminate KA Expanded plan and add KA 500. The recommendation would be Option 2: Remove Key Advantage Expanded and add the Key Advantage 500. The New Hire Eligibility Waiting Period -Current = hired 1<sup>st</sup> through 14<sup>th</sup> insurance effective 1<sup>st</sup> of following month; hired 15<sup>th</sup> through last day of month – insurance effective 1<sup>st</sup> of the month following 30 days of service. Effective 7/1/21 – change to first of the month after hire date. Non-Aflac plans will discontinue payroll deductions and those members will be billed.

Motion made by Councilor Denton and seconded by Councilor Randolph to approve going with Option 2 to remove the Key Advantage Expanded and add the Key Advantage 500.

**ROLL CALL:**

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

Motion Passes: 7 - 0

Motion made by Councilor Denton and seconded by Councilor Randolph that we adopt the new hire eligibility period which we are changing to the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month after the hire date effective 7/1/21.

ROLL CALL:

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

Motion Passes: 7 - 0

Motion made by Councilor Denton and seconded by Vice Mayor Partin to extend the meeting until 10:00pm.

Roll Call:

Councilor Denton	yes
Councilor Pelham	no
Mayor Bennett	yes
Councilor Randolph	yes
Councilor Holloway	yes
Vice Mayor Partin	yes
Councilor Gore	yes

Motion Passes: 7 - 0

**R-2-Hire Vets Now Fellowship Program**

Presentation by Jennifer Sears, Director of Human Resources. The Hire Vets Now Fellowship Program is a 6-12 week internship that allows skilled transitioning service members the opportunity to network with V3 Certified employers. Since program participants are still DOD employees, no financial support from the City is needed. This program creates an opportunity for skilled service members to gain valuable experience in the civilian workforce and provides an additional recruiting resource for the City.

Would like to implement in the fall of this year (2021).

Motion made by Councilor Pelham and seconded by Councilor Gore that the City Council to approve moving forward with the planning and preparation for the Hire Vets Now Fellowship Program Implementation.

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Roll Call:

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

Motion Passes: 7 - 0

**CR-1 Role of Vice Mayor**

Councilor Pelham, in past it was voted on to pass a lot of responsibility on to Vice Mayor and it is unclear if that needs to be reinstated or voted on again? We need to either rescind that vote, reconsider or let it play out that the Mayor take the roll as the Vice Mayor took during the previous Mayor's position.

City Attorney stated the action that was taken under the previous mayor was a transfer of supervisory responsibility in the preparation of the agenda. Two approaches; back in Feb. Council adopted changes to rule 303 and in so doing the action that it took previously assigning the responsibility of the agenda was effectively changed by that vote to change Rule 303. With respect to Council's previous action which assigned the responsibility, the designated supervisor, the liaison for supervisory purposes of the Clerk to the Vice Mayor, that needs to be undone if Council wants to change it. Council did not make the Vice Mayor the supervisor of the Clerk, the Mayor position always served as a liaison function for the body. That is what needs to be undone if that is the wish of Council going forward.

Motion made by Councilor Denton and seconded by Vice Mayor Partin to revert the decision of the Council or take back the transfer of authority of the vice mayor relative to supervising the Clerk's office

Roll Call:

Councilor Denton	no
Councilor Pelham	yes
Mayor Bennett	yes
Councilor Randolph	no
Councilor Holloway	yes
Vice Mayor Partin	yes
Councilor Gore	yes

Motion Passes: 5 - 2

**CE-2 - Purchase and Utilize MUNIS Software Module for Boards and Commissions**

Seeking approval of City Council to procure a software module from Unicode to track and maintain Boards and Commissions, and integrate into the City website to provide a location for constituents to identify what Boards and Commissions are available, which have openings and submit talent bank applications all online. Cost is \$2,000.00 per year.

Motion made by Councilor Randolph and seconded by Councilor Gore to purchase and utilize the Unicode muni software module for Boards and Commissions.

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Roll Call:

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

Motion Passes: 7-0

**ADJOURN**

Motion was made by Vice Mayor Partin, seconded by Councilor Randolph to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

  
Patience Bennett, Mayor

  
Mollie Bess, Interim City Clerk