

**April 14, 2021  
Special Council Meeting**

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT BUDGET WORK SESSION WITH HOPEWELL CITY PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS HELD April 14, 2021**

An Electronic (Zoom) Meeting of the City Council of the City of Hopewell, Virginia, and the Hopewell City Public Schools was held Wednesday, April 14, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. to discuss the Hopewell City Schools Budget for FY22.

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

**PRESENT:** Patience A. Bennett, Mayor, Ward 7  
Deborah Randolph, Councilor, Ward 1  
Arlene Holloway, Councilor, Ward 2  
Jasmine E. Gore, Councilor, Ward 4  
Janice B. Denton, Councilor, Ward 5  
Brenda S. Pelham, Councilor, Ward 6  
**ABSENT:** John B. Partin, Vice Mayor, Ward 3

Ruth Johnson, School Board  
Kristina Truell, School Board  
Christopher Reber, School Board  
Linda Hyslop, School Board  
John Griffin, Jr., School Board  
Greg Cuffey, School Board  
Melody Hackney, School Superintendent

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

Prayer was offered by Mr. Reader followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America led by Councilor Randolph. Mayor Bennett turns the work session over to Mr. Cuffey.

Mr. Cuffey then turned the meeting over to Superintendent Melody Hackney. The FY22 School Budget was presented by School Board. Expect to have an additional meeting, but wanted to give you some updates in the interim. Updates have been made based on current projections for savings, based on information that we are hopeful about with the surplus that is anticipated with the 18 caper.

Dr. Hackney explained what is needed in new monies – in addition to regular level budget of this year, we are requesting \$3.2 million dollars in new expenditures. Outline of each. – 1) Governor's recommended 5% raise for teachers and all SOQ positions in the Commonwealth; 2) Compliance Officers – improvement of services for students with disabilities – would like to move compliance officers from 210 day contracts to 20 more non instructional days at the cost of approximately \$6,000 per contract, so a total cost to the district of \$30,000, need the additional of special education teachers to be in compliance with federal guidelines around staff to student ratios in our special education classrooms; 3) English teacher is a position we squeezed last year due to budget crunch, not mandated, a position that was lost but is really needed, an essential position. Only position we feel strongly needs to be restored. 3) Health insurance increase is

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approximately \$450,000 an 11% percent increase. It is bid out every single year to keep competitive. This was the best given some of the high individual claims. No changes to benefits for current products. All of these things equal in addition to the current budget of approximately \$3.2 million. We believe that these items outlined are truly essential and that we need to be responsible to funding them.

Current budget – from city with level funding (office of youth removed). We are requesting level funding of the Office of the Youth, but did not include it in these figures, but can change that if requested. Still have the \$1.1 million dollars that was used in FY21 that CC was willing to give back, technical level funding would include the \$12.2 plus the \$1.1 allowed to fill the gap last year from the surplus. Total request of \$14,947,454. Asking you to consider a willingness to allow us to continue to covet that gap into this next year with the estimated surplus that we have been informed is going to be there for FY18 CAFR and we are optimistic we can cover the difference of \$882,270 with saving we have incurred this year. So, if you can reallocate it to us in the next fiscal year we would looking at a level funding budget in terms of the city council's ability to have to bring new money to the table other than the surplus. If the school system does not give a 5% raise, the full \$1,706,901 will not be received from the state.

**ADJOURN**

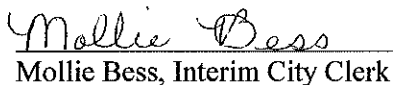
Motion was made by Councilor Denton, seconded by Mayor Bennett to adjourn the meeting.

**ROLL CALL:**

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm

  
Patience Bennett, Mayor

  
Mollie Bess, Interim City Clerk