

**CITY OF COLONIAL HEIGHTS, VIRGINIA
City Council Retreat
Friday, January 15, 2021
Colonial Heights Courthouse
550 Boulevard, Colonial Heights, Virginia**

I. Call to order

Mayor Kochuba called the meeting to order at 8:30 A.M.

City Council and staff in attendance at Roll Call by the City Clerk:

Mr. Michael A. Cherry
Mr. John E. Piotrowski
Dr. Laura F. Poe
Mr. Robert W. Wade
Mr. John T. Wood (arrived late)
Vice Mayor Elizabeth G. Luck
Mayor T. Gregory Kochuba
Mr. Douglas E. Smith, City Manager
Mr. Hugh P. Fisher, III, City Attorney
Mrs. Sheila S. Minor, Director of Finance
Mrs. Pamela B. Wallace, City Clerk

Below is a summary of items discussed and considered by Council and staff, as well as Council actions:

II. Development-Related Update and Discussion

A. Economic Development Strategic Plan Review

Mrs. Epps provided an overview of the Economic Development Strategic Plan highlighting the Business Development and Expansion Program concept and tourism/sports tourism.

Council requested actions:

- Staff will develop performance metrics tied to the goals of the Economic Development Strategic Plan.
- Staff will provide information on how many businesses are in the various business license categories once that information is available from the new ERP financial software system.

B. Staff Economic Development Update/Marketing Overview

Mrs. Epps provided Council with updates on various development projects within the City as well as ongoing Marketing efforts including:

- **Commercial Realtor Relationships/International Council of Shopping Centers**
- **Fort Lee Economic Impact Analysis**
- **Colonial Heights Restaurant Brochure**
- **Sports, Tourism, Hotels, and Restaurants marketed through the City's most recent membership with Richmond Regional Tourism**
- **Partnership with Petersburg Area Regional Tourism**
- **Development of an Economic Development website and Facebook page**
- **Future Downtown Strategies Study**
- **Creation of Small Business Grants Marketed to City businesses**

Council requested actions:

- **Staff to contact Rebkee on development of a sketch of the upcoming development for 401 Temple Avenue to have available at City Hall for public viewing.**
- **Discussion of the Commercial Tax Abatement Program at a future work session.**
- **Staff to develop a separate website for Economic Development.**
- **Staff to request future meeting with CBL Properties and City Council.**
- **Staff to follow up on concerns addressed regarding Police Department resources regarding issues at Southpark Mall.**

C. Discussion Regarding Zoning Adjacent to the Boulevard

Ms. Hall advised that before any zoning changes are made, the City's Comprehensive Plan must be consulted. The three policies that must be considered first are:

- **The Economic Development Chapter Policy**
- **The Neighborhood and Housing Chapter Policy**
- **The Land Use Chapter Policy**

Council and staff discussed the concept of rezoning areas adjacent to the Boulevard with additional interest from Council in marketing properties including rezoning as an option. Additionally, Council discussed supporting rezoning with potential developers.

Council requested actions:

- **Council will discuss further incentives to encourage Boulevard redevelopment after the results of the Downtown Strategies Study.**

D. City-owned property adjacent to the Courthouse for Park/Event Area

Mr. Smith advised that the proposed property could be included in the upcoming Downtown Strategy Study with Mr. Wade continuing, providing several ideas for

which the property could be utilized.

Mrs. Hall advised that the property had a unique purpose, as it is a key point to the downtown. It was the suggestion of Mr. Smith that Council further consider plans for the site once the Downtown Strategy Study had been completed.

III. Discussion regarding Authority for Collective Bargaining

Mr. Fisher gave a presentation regarding the legislation the General Assembly approved last year concerning collective bargaining. Mr. Fisher provided Council with the present Virginia law and the changes to that law. Mr. Fisher noted that because collective bargaining was a new concept for Virginia political subdivisions, the process would be a learning experience for each of them.

Mr. Smith also provided his past experience in Florida with collective bargaining.

Council requested actions:

There was no requested action.

V. Code Enforcement Discussion

A. Code Enforcement Overview

There was discussion relative to Code Enforcement-related matters including code enforcement during the COVID-19 pandemic with Ms. Hall, Planning Director, providing code enforcement violations from 2015 to 2020 with further explanation of the process and time necessary to address violations.

B. Code Enforcement Staffing Discussion

Ms. Hall provided an overview of the Planning Department's staff structure and responsibilities. Additionally, Ms. Hall expressed the need for additional staff and the division of the department in an effort to properly address both planning and code enforcement needs. Mayor Kochuba advised that this was not the time to discuss the need for additional personnel.

Council requested actions:

Staff to review the appropriate structure for Code Enforcement (department location, standalone function, etc.)

C. Discussion regarding Code Enforcement Fines and Violation Timetable

Council and staff discussed the Code violation timeframe for tall grass and the

concept of fines for repeat offenders

D. Discussion regarding Communication Process for Building Code/Safety Violations.

Council discussed avenues to address obvious health and/or safety issues discovered by EMS and/or police upon entering a property.

Council requested actions:

- Staff to develop a quick reference guide for employees for the reporting of various types of safety/building maintenance issues.

E. Discussion regarding inoperable vehicles.

Ms. Hall provided information relative to current restrictions regarding inoperable vehicles with lengthy discussion relative to the parking of vehicles grass areas of City right-of-way adjacent to residential yards.

Council requested actions:

- Staff to further review the legality of parked vehicles in grassy areas of the City right-of-way adjacent to residences.

VI. Break

VII. Financial Overview

A. Revenue Trends

Mrs. Minor provided Council with revenue trends for real estate and the five largest revenue sources to include sales, meals, BPOL, personal property, lodging both budget and actual revenue.

B. FY 21-22 Budget Preview

Reporting on the top 6 revenue sources, Ms. Minor stated staff was cautious relative to the recovery from the FY20 COVID slump; however, most revenue sources were close to the pre-COVID collections with the exception of the lodging tax and real estate taxes impacted by the January 1, 2022 reassessment. Continuing, Mrs. Minor provided Council with the City's major expenditures:

- Riverside Regional Jail per diem increase
- FY22 Bonds
- Comprehensive Services Act

- **Chesterfield Shared Services**
- **Health Insurance**
- **Cost of Living and Salary Market**
- **Minimum wage increase**

Ms. Minor addressed questions from Council relative to the City's shared services with Chesterfield County.

C. FY20-21 Second Quarter Financial Report

Mrs. Minor provided expenditures through December 31, 2020 noting that expenditures were in line with those from last year. Additionally, Ms. Minor provided information from the big six revenue collections, also noting these collections were in line with those from last year. Total cash and investments as reported by Mrs. Minor was \$21,883.844.80.

D. Project Updates

Mrs. Minor provided the following project:

- **ERP Project – Mrs. Minor advised that Phases I, III, and IV were complete with anticipation of Phase II, V and VI being completed by mid-July.**
- **CADD – Mrs. Minor provided updates on the departments currently working on the CADD project; specifically noting that the project continued to remain on track for implementation in July 2021.**
- **Hrouda Pump Station – Mrs. Minor reported that construction plans were substantially complete and awaiting final approval signatures. Staff was awaiting an updated schedule, but on-site work is scheduled to start in late January 2021 with final completion of the project scheduled for June of 2021.**

Continuing, Mrs. Minor and Mr. Smith provided comments relative to the availability of CARES Funds and the extension of those funds through December 2021.

E. Other Finance Items

Mrs. Minor provided suggested revenue-increasing scenarios and possible ways to reduce expenditures. Additionally, Mrs. Minor provided information relative to the results of the FY2020 operations including the savings and distribution of the General Fund balance.

Council requested actions:

Staff will follow up on the level of service of the cleaning company for janitorial service and the number of hours staff is spending for COVID-related cleaning.

VIII. Break for Lunch

IX. Financial Overview – Continued

There was no additional financial information provided after lunch.

X. City Infrastructure

A. Utility Infrastructure Funding Discussion

Mrs. Minor provided Council with the results of the rate study including the total replacement cost for the City's existing waterline and sewer line infrastructure. Continuing, Mrs. Minor presented the study findings revealing the current revenue stream was insufficient to meet the needs to address the current infrastructure inadequacies. With this being presented, Mrs. Minor presented Council with several rate increase options to consider in an effort to address the City's existing and future infrastructure needs. There was much discussion regarding the amount of the increase as well as going to a monthly billing cycle.

Council requested actions:

Council unanimously supported a 5% water/sewer rate increase for FY2022, for implementation in July 2021. Council will consider future rate increases for FY2023 for implementation in July 2022 in conjunction with potentially moving utility billing to a monthly cycle at that time.

B. Pavement Preservation Program Discussion

Before beginning his presentation, Mr. Todd Flippen, Director of Public Works, advised that the City would utilize federal funds as recommended by the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the proposed Dupuy and Westover Projects.

Mr. Flippen provided information on the following current preservation plans:

- **Conduit Road (North) – Construction will include mill and overlay pavement between Temple Avenue and Ellerslie Avenue with an estimated cost of \$300K**
- **Conduit Road (Temple to I-95 Overpass) – Construction will include mill and overlay pavement, reinstallation of loop detectors and restoration of**

- pavement markings with an estimated cost of \$400K
- **Conduit Road (I-95 Overpass to East Westover Avenue) – Construction will include mill and overlay pavement, installation of loop detectors, restoration of pavement markings with an estimated cost of \$220K**
 - **Washington and Stuart Avenue – Construction will include patch and seal pavement where needed, application of double coat of latex modified emulsion treatment with an estimated cost of \$270K.**

Mr. Flippen provided two additional fund options as follows:

- **Option 1 - Conduit Road (East Westover to Ivey Avenue) – Construction will include mill and overlay pavement between Westover and Ivey Avenue and restoration of pavement markings with an estimated cost of \$150K.**
- **Option 2 – Roslyn Avenue (Washington to Ivey Avenue) – Construction will include patch and seal pavement where needed and application of double coat of latex modified emulsion treatment with an estimated cost of \$250K.**

Council discussed concerns over the appearance of crack sealing on roads with Mr. Flippen advising that staff could provide information in the future on areas where crack sealing may be recommended.

Council requested actions:

Staff will proceed with the bidding process for pavement preservation projects and will continue to hold approximately \$300,000 of additional pavement preservation funding in contingency.

XI. Break

XII. Discussion regarding Public Safety Funding

A. Public Safety Compensation

Council discussed public safety compensation including compression affecting supervisors' pay. Mr. Smith provided Council with the updated City Pay Plan and a Public Safety Compression Study conducted by Chesterfield County for review and discussion. Additionally, Mr. Smith reviewed information compiled by Captain Anspach as it related to Colonial Heights' Public Safety and Council discussed a step plan/pay plan concept.

Council requested actions:

Staff will conduct a review of supervisor compensation with City departments.

B. Public Safety Vehicles

Council discussed staff's concerns that not enough vehicles were being purchased for the Police Department. Mr. Smith provided information showing the number of vehicles and the vehicles' age.

Council requested actions:

Staff will review funding for replacement of Police vehicles during the upcoming budget session.

XIII. Other Discussion Items

A. City Holiday Schedule

Council and staff discussed potential changes to the holiday schedule as noted in the City Code.

Council requested actions:

Maintain Lee-Jackson-King Day in the City holiday list in the City Code and for this year advertise generally as "City Offices Closed."

B. Tax Abatement Program Marketing

There was no discussion on this topic. Council will discuss at an upcoming work session.

C. Discussion Regarding Rental Properties

There was no discussion on this topic. Council will discuss at an upcoming work session.

XIV. Adjournment

A motion was made by Mayor Kochuba, seconded by Mr. Cherry, to adjourned the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 P.M.

APPROVED:

T. Gregory Kochuba, Mayor

ATTEST:

Pamela B. Wallace, City Clerk