

**City Council Regular Session  
April 27, 2015**

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City met in regular session on Monday, April 27, 2015 in Council Chambers, located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Municipal Administration Building, 306 E. Colonial Avenue, Elizabeth City, NC.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Joe Peel  
Councilwoman Jean Baker  
Councilman Ray Donnelly  
Mayor Pro Tem Anita Hummer  
Councilman Tony Stimatz  
Councilman Michael Brooks  
Councilman Darius Horton

MEMBER ABSENT: Councilman Kem Spence *(Unable to attend due to illness)*  
*(Clerk notation: One 4<sup>th</sup> Ward Seat Currently Vacant)*

OTHERS PRESENT: City Manager Rich Olson  
City Attorney Bill Morgan  
Finance Director Sarah Blanchard  
Planning Director June Brooks  
Chief of Police Eddie Buffaloe  
Electric Department Superintendent Karl Clow  
Assistant to the City Manager Angela Cole  
ECDI Director Rebecca Cross  
Public Utilities Superintendent Paul Williams  
Fire Chief Larry Mackey  
IT Director Matthew Simpson  
Inspections Director Stanley Ward  
Parks and Recreation Director Bobbi White  
City Clerk Vivian White

The City Council regular session was called to order by Mayor Joe Peel at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Peel welcomed everyone to the meeting and recognized Councilman Darius Horton to give the invocation, after which Mayor Peel led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1. Agenda Adjustments and Approval:**

Mayor Peel called for any adjustments to and approval of the agenda.

**Motion was made by Councilwoman Jean Baker, seconded by Councilman Darius Horton, to approve the agenda with any necessary corrections. Those voting in favor were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Brooks, and Horton. Against: None. The motion carried unanimously.**

**2. Statement of Disclosure:**

The City Clerk read the Statement of Disclosure. No conflict of interest disclosures regarding items listed on the agenda were made.

### **3. Proclamation – National Police Week and Peace Officers’ Memorial Day:**

Mayor Peel read and presented a proclamation calling upon all citizens to observe May 15, 2015, as “Peace Officers’ Memorial Day” and May 10-16, 2015 as “National Police Week” in Elizabeth City. The proclamation further asked that all residents join in commemorating our law enforcement officers, past and present, who by their faithful and loyal devotion to their responsibilities have rendered a dedicated service to their communities; and in so doing, have established for themselves an enviable and enduring reputation for preserving the rights and security of all citizens.

The proclamation was accepted by Chief of Police Eddie Buffaloe, who was accompanied by several members of the Elizabeth City Police Department. Chief Buffaloe thanked Mayor Peel and the City Council for the proclamation. He stated that the department takes its responsibilities seriously and strives to perform every day with honor, dignity, integrity, professionalism, respect and fundamental fairness.

### **4. Comments from the Public:**

Susan Neal Matousek, no address given, stated that she and her son are victims of domestic violence. She stated that she has made multiple reports of child abuse and domestic violence to local teachers and law enforcement officers, but no action has been taken. She stated that the local community does not have enough resources for victims of domestic violence. She provided a packet of information to the City Clerk and requested that it be distributed to members of the City Council.

Jacqueline S. Latson, 1305 S. Williams Circle, Elizabeth City, NC read prepared remarks to the Council, which she indicated had been signed by some citizens of the Fourth Ward. She stated that those residents who signed the letter feel that they are being underserved. She said that the letter writers want to know that their Fourth Ward representatives are attending Council committee meetings, workshops in Raleigh and local community meetings in order to stay tuned to the needs and concerns of the community. She stated that if the Fourth Ward is not being represented during committee meetings, the ward is not being fairly represented. She suggested that a City Council newsletter be generated every month that would document attendance by Councilors at the meetings and events she described, as well as to document the speakers during the meetings and the topics on which they spoke. She provided examples of how the newsletter could be distributed, such as posted online, placed in utility bills or displayed in Council Chambers. She said that it was her belief that a Council newsletter would serve to “decrease community disengagement, not only in the Fourth Ward but in the rest of the City as well.” She said her remarks were about “accountability, proof of purpose and the citizens’ right to know” that Councilors are “working for us, with us and because of us.” She commented that if measures are taken now to try to improve “standards of expectation, respectability, accountability and leadership,” “the next well-meaning college student will have a better idea of just what is expected in order to be a respectable Elizabeth City councilman.”

**5. Approval of Minutes:**

Mayor Peel called for the Council's pleasure regarding approval of the minutes.

a. City Council Regular Session of April 13, 2015:

**Motion was made by Councilman Tony Stimatz, seconded by Councilman Ray Donnelly, to adopt the City Council Regular Session minutes of April 13, 2015 as presented, with any necessary corrections. Those voting in favor were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Brooks, and Horton. Against: None. The motion carried unanimously.**

**6. Consent Agenda:**

Mayor Peel recognized City Manager Olson to read the items on the Consent Agenda for the record. Mr. Olson recommended approval of all items, as follows:

**Beginning of Consent Agenda:**

a. Items recommended for approval by the Finance Committee:

1. Consideration – Adoption of various budget amendments, as follows;

**BUDGET AMENDMENTS**

**BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City that the following amendments be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015 and Roanoke Drainage Project Ordinance:**

**SECTION I. That the Governor's Crime Commission Overtime Grant (103490.5121) and Police Overtime Expenditure Grant (105100.0221) be increased by \$25,000.**

**(To record Police Department overtime grant. There is no match required.)**

**SECTION II. That the Electric Fund Retained Earnings Appropriated (303990.0000) and Customer Service Bank Charges (307200.4200) be increased by \$36,000.**

**That the Water & Sewer Retained Earnings Appropriated (313990.0000) and Customer Service Bank Charges (317200.4200) be increased by \$36,000.**

**(To record bank charges with Wells Fargo. The City now pays using direct method rather than compensating balance.)**

**SECTION III. That the Electric Fund Retained Earnings Appropriated (303990.0000) and Stockbridge Phase II (308300.7348) be increased by \$372,055.**

(Electric material costs for Stockbridge Phase II.)

**SECTION IV.** That the Roanoke Drainage Phase III (673980.0000) and Roanoke Capital Improvements (676614.7300) be increased by \$75,000.

(To reflect actual loan proceeds received for Roanoke Drainage Project Phase III.)

ADOPTED, this 27<sup>th</sup> day of April 2015.

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**Joseph W. Peel**  
Mayor

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**Vivian D. White, CMC/NCCMC**  
City Clerk

2. Consideration – Adoption of Condemnation Ordinances authorizing demolition of the applicable structures located at 901 Hunter Street, 1104 Wood Street and 402 E. Burgess Street, as follows;

**ORDINANCE # 2015-04-01**  
**CONDEMNATION AND DEMOLITION**

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**AN ORDINANCE DIRECTING THE BUILDING INSPECTOR TO REPAIR OR DEMOLISH THE PROPERTY HEREIN DESCRIBED AS UNFIT FOR HUMAN HABITATION AND DIRECTING THAT A NOTICE BE PLACED THEREON THAT THE SAME MAY NOT BE OCCUPIED UNTIL REPAIRED OR THAT THE STRUCTURE BE DEMOLISHED.**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City finds that the property described herein is unfit for human habitation under the local and state codes, and that all the provisions of said codes have been met as a condition of the adoption of this Ordinance; and

**WHEREAS**, said structure should be repaired to meet the requirements of the Code or demolished as directed by the Building Inspector, and should be placarded by placing thereon a notice prohibiting use for human habitation; and

**WHEREAS**, the owners of said structure have been given a reasonable opportunity to bring the premises up to the standards of the subject codes in

accordance and pursuant to an order issued by the Building Inspector on August 27, 2014 and the owner has failed to comply with said order;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED**, by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City that:

**Section 1.** The Building Inspector is hereby authorized and directed to place on the house at 901 Hunter Street (Map 24, Block B, Parcel #20, Tax I.D. 892309076213) a sign containing the legend:

***“This building is unfit for human habitation; the use or occupancy of this building for human habitation is prohibited and unlawful.”***

**Section 2.** The Building Inspector is hereby authorized and directed to proceed to repair or demolish the above-described structure in accordance with his order to the owner thereof dated August 27, 2014 and after abatement, then charge the property owners for all expenses incurred, including any accrued interest after the initial billing.

**Section 3.** It shall be unlawful for any person to remove or cause to be removed said placard from any building to which it is affixed. It shall likewise be unlawful for any person to occupy or to permit the occupancy of any building herein declared to be unfit for human habitation.

**Section 4.** This Ordinance shall become effective upon its adoption.

**ADOPTED**, this 27<sup>th</sup> day of April 2015

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Joseph W. Peel  
Mayor

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Vivian D. White, CMC/NCCMC  
City Clerk

**ORDINANCE # 2015-04-02  
CONDEMNATION AND DEMOLITION**

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**AN ORDINANCE DIRECTING THE BUILDING INSPECTOR TO REPAIR OR DEMOLISH THE PROPERTY HEREIN DESCRIBED AS UNFIT FOR HUMAN HABITATION AND DIRECTING THAT A NOTICE BE PLACED THEREON THAT THE**

**SAME MAY NOT BE OCCUPIED UNTIL REPAIRED OR THAT THE STRUCTURE BE DEMOLISHED.**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City finds that the property described herein is unfit for human habitation under the local and state codes, and that all the provisions of said codes have been met as a condition of the adoption of this Ordinance; and

**WHEREAS**, said structure should be repaired to meet the requirements of the Code or demolished as directed by the Building Inspector, and should be placarded by placing thereon a notice prohibiting use for human habitation; and

**WHEREAS**, the owners of said structure have been given a reasonable opportunity to bring the premises up to the standards of the subject codes in accordance and pursuant to an order issued by the Building Inspector on January 29, 2015 and the owner has failed to comply with said order;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED**, by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City that:

**Section 1.** The Building Inspector is hereby authorized and directed to place on the house at 1104 Wood Street (Map 25, Block B, Parcel #49, Tax I.D. 891312956929) a sign containing the legend:

***“This building is unfit for human habitation; the use or occupancy of this building for human habitation is prohibited and unlawful.”***

**Section 2.** The Building Inspector is hereby authorized and directed to proceed to repair or demolish the above-described structure in accordance with his order to the owner thereof dated January 29, 2015 and after abatement, then charge the property owners for all expenses incurred, including any accrued interest after the initial billing.

**Section 3.** It shall be unlawful for any person to remove or cause to be removed said placard from any building to which it is affixed. It shall likewise be unlawful for any person to occupy or to permit the occupancy of any building herein declared to be unfit for human habitation.

**Section 4.** This Ordinance shall become effective upon its adoption.

**ADOPTED**, this 27<sup>th</sup> day of April 2015

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Joseph W. Peel  
Mayor

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Vivian D. White, CMC/NCCMC  
City Clerk

**ORDINANCE # 2015-04-03**  
**CONDEMNATION AND DEMOLITION**

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**AN ORDINANCE DIRECTING THE BUILDING INSPECTOR TO REPAIR OR DEMOLISH THE PROPERTY HEREIN DESCRIBED AS UNFIT FOR HUMAN HABITATION AND DIRECTING THAT A NOTICE BE PLACED THEREON THAT THE SAME MAY NOT BE OCCUPIED UNTIL REPAIRED OR THAT THE STRUCTURE BE DEMOLISHED.**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City finds that the property described herein is unfit for human habitation under the local and state codes, and that all the provisions of said codes have been met as a condition of the adoption of this Ordinance; and

**WHEREAS**, said structure should be repaired to meet the requirements of the Code or demolished as directed by the Building Inspector, and should be placarded by placing thereon a notice prohibiting use for human habitation; and

**WHEREAS**, the owners of said structure have been given a reasonable opportunity to bring the premises up to the standards of the subject codes in accordance and pursuant to an order issued by the Building Inspector on January 29, 2015 and the owner has failed to comply with said order;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED**, by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City that:

**Section 1.** The Building Inspector is hereby authorized and directed to place on the house at 402 East Burgess Street (Map 12, Block C, Parcel #5, Tax I.D. 891420911087) a sign containing the legend:

***“This building is unfit for human habitation; the use or occupancy of this building for human habitation is prohibited and unlawful.”***

**Section 2.** The Building Inspector is hereby authorized and directed to proceed to repair or demolish the above-described structure in accordance with his order to the owner thereof dated January 29, 2015 and after abatement, then charge the property owners for all expenses incurred, including any accrued interest after the initial billing.

**Section 3.** It shall be unlawful for any person to remove or cause to be removed said placard from any building to which it is affixed. It shall likewise be unlawful for any person to occupy or to permit the occupancy of any building herein declared to be unfit for human habitation.

**Section 4.** This Ordinance shall become effective upon its adoption.

**ADOPTED**, this 27<sup>th</sup> day of April 2015

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Joseph W. Peel  
Mayor

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Vivian D. White, CMC/NCCMC  
City Clerk

3. Consideration – Adoption of resolution authorizing financing of a sanitation refuse truck with BB&T Bank in the amount of \$220,000 at a fixed rate of 1.71% for a term of five years, as follows;

**Resolution # 2015 – 04-02  
Approving Financing Terms**

**WHEREAS:** The City of Elizabeth City, North Carolina (the “City”) has previously determined to undertake a project for the financing of a refuse truck, (The “Project”), and the Finance Officer has now presented a proposal for the financing of such Project.

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, as follows:**

1. The City hereby determines to finance the Project through Branch Banking and Trust Company (“BB&T”), in accordance with the proposal dated April 15, 2015. The amount financed shall not exceed \$220,000.00, the annual interest rate (in the absence of default or change in tax status) shall not exceed 1.71%, and the financing term shall not exceed 5 years from closing.
2. All financing contracts and all related documents for the closing of the financing (the “Financing Documents”) shall be consistent with the foregoing terms. All officers and employees of the City are hereby authorized and directed to execute and deliver any Financing Documents, and to take all such further action as they may consider necessary or desirable, to carry out the financing of the Project as contemplated by the proposal and this resolution. The Financing Documents shall include a Financing Agreement



and Deed of Trust and a Project Fund Agreement as BB&T may request.

3. The Finance Officer is hereby authorized and directed to hold executed copies of the Financing Documents until the conditions for the delivery of the Financing Documents have been completed to such officer's satisfaction. The Finance Officer is authorized to approve changes to any Financing Documents previously signed by City officers or employees, provided that such changes shall not substantially alter the intent of such documents or certificates from the intent expressed in the forms executed by such officers. The Financing Documents shall be in such final forms as the Finance Officer shall approve, with the Finance Officer's release of any Financing Document for delivery constituting conclusive evidence of such officer's final approval of the Document's final form.
4. The City shall not take or omit to take any action the taking or omission of which shall cause its interest payments on this financing to be includable in the gross income for federal income tax purposes of the registered owners of the interest payment obligations. The City hereby designates its obligations to make principal and interest payments under the Financing Documents as "qualified tax-exempt obligations" for the purpose of Internal Revenue Code Section 265(b)(3).
5. The City intends that the adoption of this resolution will be a declaration of the City's official intent to reimburse expenditures for the project that is to be financed from the proceeds of the BB&T financing described above. The City intends that funds that have been advanced, or that may be advanced, from the City's general fund, or any other City fund related to the project, for project costs may be reimbursed from the financing proceeds.
6. All prior actions of the City officers in furtherance of the purposes of this resolution are hereby ratified, approved and confirmed. All other resolutions (or parts thereof) in conflict with this resolution are hereby repealed, to the extent of the conflict. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

Approved this 27th day of April, 2015.

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Joseph W. Peel  
Mayor

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Vivian D. White, CMC/NCCMC  
City Clerk

4. Consideration – Adoption of resolution, as follows, declaring property identified as PIN: 7977499329 and Map P112-107 as surplus property and authorize the City Clerk to begin the upset bid process as required by North Carolina General Statutes once an offer has been received on the property.

**Resolution # 2015 – 04-03  
Declaring Real Property Surplus  
and Authorizing Sale by Upset Bid Process**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Elizabeth City is the owner of real property identified on the Pasquotank County Registry as PIN: 7977499329 and Map P112-107 and having a physical address of 00000 Mill Pond Road; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Elizabeth City has no current or future need of said property for public use and is desirous of selling said parcel.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City that the parcel of property identified on the Pasquotank County Registry as PIN: 7977499329 and Map P112-107, located at 00000 Mill Pond Road is hereby declared surplus to the needs of the City of Elizabeth City; and

**FURTHER**, the City Clerk shall be authorized to begin the upset bid process as required by North Carolina General Statutes §160A-269 once an Offer of Purchase for this parcel has been made to the City.

**ADOPTED**, this the 27<sup>th</sup> day of April 2015.

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Joseph W. Peel  
Mayor

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Vivian D. White, CMC/NCCMC  
City Clerk

- b. Consideration - Adoption of the following Resolution amending the City's Records Retention and Disposition Policy to incorporate the January 5, 2015 amendments published by the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, as described.

**RESOLUTION # 2015-04-04**  
**ADOPTING THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL RESOURCES**  
**MUNICIPAL RECORDS RETENTION AND DISPOSITION SCHEDULE**  
**AMENDMENTS DATED JANUARY 5, 2015**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City that the Council hereby adopts the North Carolina Municipal Records Retention and Disposition Schedule amendments as published by the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources in accordance with the provisions of Chapters 121 and 132 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, dated January 5, 2015, a copy of which is on file in the office of the City Clerk.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, this schedule is to remain in effect from the date of approval until it is reviewed and updated.

**ADOPTED**, this 27<sup>th</sup> day of April 2015.

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Joseph W. Peel  
Mayor

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Vivian D. White, CMC/NCCMC  
City Clerk

**End of Consent Agenda.**

**Motion was made by Councilwoman Jean Baker, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Anita Hummer, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Those voting in favor were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Brooks, and Horton. Against: None. The motion carried unanimously.**

**7. Regular Agenda:**

- a. Consideration – Adoption of Resolution in Support of Desert Wind LLC Energy Project.

Mayor Peel recognized Mr. Olson to provide a review of this item. Mr. Olson stated that the project in question is located in both Pasquotank and Perquimans Counties and has been approved and permitted by the two counties. He advised that the project also possessed the necessary approvals by the FAA.

He reported that during the 2013 General Assembly, Session Law 2013-51 (HB 484) was approved, which established a permitting program for the siting of wind towers in North Carolina. He said that the Desert Wind project had already received its FAA certificate of non-hazard as well as all other required permits. He pointed out that the project should be exempt from the 2013 Session Law. Mr. Olson stated that DENR has decided that the Desert Wind project must now go through the entire permitting process once again.

Mr. Olson advised that this particular project has great economic impact for Pasquotank and Perquimans Counties and it is believed that the hurdle now being raised by DENR is unwarranted and not allowed by State statute.

Councilman Stimatz inquired as to why DENR is taking this position. Mr. Olson responded that staff did not know why. He said that staff has a letter from the Friends of Seymour Johnson, the group that originally proposed the session law in 2013 that reports that the group has no problem with this particular project. Mr. Olson stated that the permitting process is very involved and very expensive and he could not understand why DENR is requiring this company to go through the permitting process all over again.

Mayor Peel commented that this project represents hundreds of thousands of dollars of tax revenue for both counties and will create approximately 25 good paying jobs. He said that the project will put our area in a really good position to be one step ahead of the game if wind power is ever developed offshore.

Councilman Stimatz asked if sales tax would be collected on the electricity generated. Mr. Olson responded that sales tax is only collected on retail electricity, not wholesale electricity. He stated that the electricity generated by this project would most likely be shipped out of state. He pointed out that the reason the wind farm is located in that particular area is because it is very close to Dominion's 235 kVA transmission line, which provides the likely opportunity to ship the power to the northeastern part of the country.

**Motion was made by Councilman Ray Donnelly, seconded by Councilwoman Jean Baker to adopt the following resolution in support of the Desert Wind LLC Energy Project and direct staff to send a copy to our legislative delegation, Governor McCrory and Donald R. van der Vaart, Secretary of DENR, as soon as possible. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Brooks and Horton. Against: None. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Resolution # 2015-04-05  
In Support of the Desert Wind, LLC Energy Project  
in Northeastern North Carolina**

**WHEREAS**, Session Law 2013-51 (House Bill 484) established a permitting program for the siting and operation of wind energy facilities in North Carolina; and

**WHEREAS**, the Desert Wind LLC Energy Project proposed by Iberdrola Renewables, Inc., to be located in Pasquotank and Perquimans Counties, was exempt from House Bill 484 because the project already possessed its Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certification of non-hazard; and

**WHEREAS**, the Desert Wind LLC Energy Project originally proposed the construction of 150 wind turbines within a 2,513-acre portion of a 24,242 acre review area and received all required permits for construction of the project as proposed; and

**WHEREAS**, the project is now proposed to include an amended increase in turbine height from 486 feet to 492 feet; however, the footprint of the project, the number of towers and the power output remain the same as originally proposed; and

**WHEREAS**, this plan amendment, has been deemed a non-material change by the FAA and the Pasquotank County and Perquimans County Planning Boards, resulting in the FAA renewing its certificate of non-hazard; and

**WHEREAS**, the North Carolina Department of Energy and Natural Resources (DENR) has taken the unjustifiable, inflexible stance that because of this non-material plan amendment, the Desert Wind LLC Energy Project must now be subjected to the requirements of Chapter 143, Article 21C, "Permitting of Wind Energy Facilities," the same legislation from which this project was specifically exempt; and

**WHEREAS**, this requirement by DENR will deal a death blow to the project and cost the taxpayers and citizens of Pasquotank and Perquimans Counties more than \$30 million in future revenues.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City that the City Council supports the Desert Wind LLC Energy Project and implores the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources to reverse its unreasonable decision regarding the permitting of this project.

**ADOPTED**, this the 27<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2015.

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Joseph W. Peel  
Mayor

*Attest:*

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Vivian D. White, CMC/NCCMC  
City Clerk

- b. Consideration – Authorization to Execute Contract for Cemetery Mowing for Fiscal year 2015-2016.

Mayor Peel recognized Mr. Olson for staff's report on this item. Mr. Olson stated that the contract presented for consideration covers the mowing of the eight cemeteries. He said the first such contract was awarded in 1988 for \$39,000. He stated that during fiscal year 2012-2013, the Council instructed City staff to re-bid the mowing project. He reported that the low bidder at that time was Glen Needham, D/B/A K-9 Lawn Care in the amount of \$41,999. Mr. Olson stated that Mr. Needham has again agreed to do the project for the same price. He said that City staff is requesting that the contract be renewed for one more year, the last of a three-year cycle. Mr. Olson advised that for fiscal year 2016-2017, staff will re-bid the cemetery mowing project.

**Motion was made by Councilman Tony Stimatz, seconded by Councilman Darius Horton, to award the contract in the amount stated. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Brooks and Horton. Against: None. The motion carried unanimously.**

#### **8. Comments and Inquiries on Non-Agenda Items:**

Councilman Brooks stated that "voting" is something heartfelt for him, not only because of what he personally has been through, but what the nation has been through. He said that personally, he has been in a Special Election, in a hold-over controversy, and a residency charge. He stated that everyone must understand that there is power in the vote. He said that "the slave master didn't want the slaves to learn to read, because there was power in it. Some in America didn't want equal opportunity and education, because there was power in it. Some in America didn't want all citizens to vote today, because there's power in it." He stated that "if we are indeed one nation under God, we must love our neighbor as ourselves – when they hurt, we must hurt." He stated that during the Washington, DC prayer pilgrimage of 1957, Dr. King covered it when he said "give us the ballot and we will transform the salient misdeeds of bloodthirsty mobs into the calculated good deeds of orderly citizens. Give us the ballot, and we will fill our legislative halls with men of goodwill and send to the sacred halls of Congress men who will not sign a Southern Manifesto because of their devotion to the manifesto of justice. Give us the ballot, and we will place judges on the benches of the South who will do justly and love mercy, and we will place at the head of the southern states governors who will, who have felt not only the tang of the human, but the glow of the Divine." Councilman Brooks stated "in 2015, we have the ballot. Go vote. Use the ballot. Vote for who you call and express that you make minimum wage and are trying to pay \$800 to \$1200 electric bills. Vote for who you call when you have to make a choice between food, medicines or your lights. If you have problems with leaders missing in action, go vote." He reported that early voting starts on April 30 and ends on May 9 and that Election Day is Tuesday, May 12. He stated that "when Councilman Walton was on Council, I don't know how many electric bills he might have paid." He said he could not understand why people do not vote when they have the power of the vote. He said at the end of the day, he only had one vote, but there are eight Council members. He encouraged citizens to call the City when they have problems.

Councilman Stimatz thanked Councilman Brooks for bringing up the importance of voting. He said that it is important to vote for candidates that are going to help get things done. He reminded everyone that the rainy season is going to be starting and as summer comes, we may be faced with hurricanes. He stated that as chairman of the Storm Water Advisory Board, he wanted to advise that one of the biggest issues they are confronted with is people putting leaves and trash in the street and not on the curbside to be picked up. He pointed out that this creates problems and blockage in the storm water drains and may cause citizens to end up with water in their homes. He stated that if citizens have a lot of trash to be picked up, they may simply call the Public Works Department to come and haul it away.

Councilman Horton thanked everyone for attending the meeting and thanked those who were watching on TV as well. He stated that he wanted to echo Councilman Brooks' comments regarding voting in the Special Election. He said it was important for the residents of the Fourth Ward to know that both polling places will be open on Tuesday, May 12. He asked all citizens of the Fourth Ward to go to the polls and vote. He asked all residents to remember the City of Baltimore in their prayers.

Mayor Pro Tem Hummer commended the Elizabeth City Police Department for the upcoming Police Week, as well as the Fire Department and every other department in the City. She stated that the City has great people working and she is proud of all of them. She stated that she was amazed by the demonstration provided during the Work Session on the Nexgrid Smart Grid software. She encouraged the citizens of the Fourth Ward to vote in the upcoming Special Election.

Councilwoman Baker stated that the Chamber of Commerce had a good Business Expo and it was very well attended. She stated that the Chamber did an excellent job, as usual. She pointed out that there were a lot of new companies participating that she had not seen previously.

Councilman Donnelly encouraged everyone in the Fourth Ward to get out and exercise their right to vote.

Mayor Peel stated that the right to vote was important and he pointed out that oftentimes people do not take advantage of that right. He encouraged everyone in the Fourth Ward to vote during upcoming the Special Election.

## **9. Adjournment:**

There being no further business to be discussed, Mayor Peel adjourned the meeting at 7:33 p.m.

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Joseph W. Peel  
Mayor

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Vivian D. White, CMC/NCCMC  
City Clerk