

**AMENDED
City Council Regular Session
May 27, 2014**

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City met in regular session on Tuesday, May 27, 2014 in Council Chambers, located on the 2nd 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 (*arrived at 7:10 p.m.*)
Councilman Kem Spence
Councilman Darius Horton
Councilman Montravias King

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: City Manager Rich Olson
City Attorney Bill Morgan
Finance Director Sarah Blanchard
Planning Director June Brooks
Chief of Police Eddie Buffaloe
Assistant to the City Manager Angela Cole
ECDI Director Rebecca Cross
Public Utilities Director Paul Fredette
Fire Chief Larry Mackey
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 Tony Stimatz to give the invocation after which all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Agenda Adjustments and Approval:

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

Mayor Peel announced that two additions to the agenda were brought forward from the Work Session held earlier in the evening, as follows:

- a) A recommendation regarding the Community Relations Commission; and

- b) A Closed Session as allowed by NCGS § 143-318.11(a)(5) – Acquisition of Property.

Councilman King requested to add a consideration of a golf cart initiative.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Jean Baker, seconded by Councilman Tony Stimatz, to approve the agenda as amended. Those voting in favor were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Spence, Horton and King. Against: None. The motion carried unanimously by Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Spence, Horton and King. (Brooks had not yet arrived.)

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. Comments from the Public:

LaFrances Finney Overton, 7317 Reedy Creek Drive, Fayetteville, NC/703 Herrington Road, Elizabeth City, NC stated that she wished to speak about her Elizabeth City property located at 703 Herrington Road, which had been condemned and ordered demolished during the City Council meeting of May 12, 2014. She provided an explanation to the Council regarding her lack of response during the condemnation process and cited her service in the military overseas as the reason for her inability to communicate with the City. She asked the Council to reconsider its action.

Mayor Peel advised Ms. Overton that the Council does not respond during Council meetings and advised her to continue to work with City staff regarding this matter.

4. Approval of Minutes:

- City Council Regular Session – May 12, 2014

Motion was made by Councilman Tony Stimatz, seconded by Councilman Darius Horton, to adopt the minutes of the May 12, 2014 City Council Regular Session as presented. Those voting in favor were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Brooks, Spence, Horton and King. Against: None. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Consent Agenda:

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

Consent Agenda:

- a. Consideration – Authorization to submit application to the Tourism Development Authority for funds to match the \$2,500 Pasquotank County contribution for the 2014 Annual 4th of July Celebration;
- b. Consideration – Authorization to submit a pre-application to the Division of Coastal Management for a CAMA Access Grant in the amount of \$117,000 for demolition, renovation and improvements to the Shipyard properties at 702 and 708 Riverside Avenue.

End of Consent Agenda:

Motion was made by Councilwoman Jean Baker, seconded by Councilman Darius Horton, to approve the above Consent Agenda as presented. Those voting in favor were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Brooks, Spence, Horton and King. Against: None. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Regular Agenda:

- a. Consideration-Approval of Draft General Disclosure Form as presented; and further, direct that all City Councilors, City department directors and City employees complete the new form for 2014 no later than June 15, 2014.

Mayor Peel recognized City Clerk White for a review of this item. Ms. White explained that on April 28, 2014, the City Council adopted amendments to the City's Code of Ordinances, Article IV Code of Ethics. She stated that the revisions contained in Sec. 2-114 of the Code provided that all City employees shall now file an annual disclosure with the City Manager in the same manner as had been required of the City Council and City department directors. She stated that the appropriate amendments had been made to the previously used disclosure form for the Council's consideration and approval. In addition, she reported that staff recommends that the City Council require that the Councilors, Department Directors and all City employees complete the form no later than June 15, 2014, since this provision was a recommendation by the City's auditor during the last audit report.

Councilman Stimatz suggested that the words "for-profit or non-profit" be added in the business interest section, Sec. 2-114(a)1, of the General Disclosure Form to further describe the business entity; and that the section also be further clarified by adding the word "employee" as an additional relationship of the business entity required for disclosure.

City Attorney Morgan responded that he saw no reason that the word "employee" should not be added; and in so doing, there would be no question by the auditor as to the completeness of the form. Councilman Stimatz pointed out that this inclusion would make the disclosure more transparent.

Councilman Stimatz asked if the cycle would revert back to the normal annual report on February 1 after this June 15, 2014 report, to which Mr. Olson responded that it would.

Motion was made by Councilman Tony Stimatz, seconded by Councilman Montravias King to adopt the General Disclosure Form as presented with the correction of adding “(for-profit or non-profit)” and the word “employee” to the business section of the form; and further, direct that all City Councilors, City department directors and City employees complete the new form for 2014 no later than June 15, 2014. Those voting in favor were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Brooks, Spence, Horton and King. Against: None. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Consideration – Review of Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Recommended Budget Changes; and Call for a Public Hearing to receive public comment on June 9, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers.

Mayor Peel recognized Mr. Olson for a review of this consideration. Mr. Olson reported that a presentation had been given to the Finance Committee during their meeting held on May 21, 2014 to recap the changes that had been made to date to the Manager’s Recommended Budget for fiscal year 2014-2015. He stated that good news had been received from Pasquotank County, in that almost \$35,000,000 more in personal property valuation had been found than had been originally reported. He said that this increase in revenue will allow the City to reduce the projected tax rate increase by 2.5 cents. He stated that the projected revenue-neutral rate with the increased tax revenue is reduced from 61¢ to 59¢ and the proposed 2¢ tax increase provided for in the budget will decrease from 64¢ to 61.5¢. He advised the Council that 1¢ of tax revenue is now equivalent to \$111,000.

He reported that the Finance Committee had made additional changes and requests during their meeting on May 21, 2014, as follows:

- Funds are allocated to Parks & Recreation to update/install signage at 14 City-owned parks, excluding Waterfront Park, the Jeanette property kayak launch and the proposed Veterans Park;
- Funds are allocated to Parks & Recreation to reconstruct the Fish Court boardwalk;
- \$45,000 is allocated to Parks & Recreation to convert Enfield Park tennis courts to another recreational use – basketball courts, Skateboard Park, or splash pad.

Councilman Stimatz pointed out for discussion purposes that the Enfield Park recreational use conversion had not yet been decided and the items mentioned were examples discussed during the Finance Committee meeting.

Mr. Olson went over in detail all adjustments made to date across all funds to the Manager’s Recommended Budget using a PowerPoint presentation; and he provided a handout of the adjustments to the Councilors in spreadsheet format. He reported that the budget includes a proposed reduction in electric rates of 1.5% and a reduction in the Electric Fund transfer to the General Fund in the amount of \$125,000. In addition, he stated that the budget includes a water and sewer rate increase of 5%. He said that

staff continues to work with Pasquotank County to determine the amount of increase that will be charged the City for the purchase of RO water and reported that a meeting was scheduled with County staff for June 3, 2014.

Mr. Olson provided staff's estimates to revitalize the Enfield Park Tennis Courts, as follows: to refinish the courts as tennis courts, \$40,000; to convert the tennis courts to basketball courts, \$43,000; to convert the courts to a splash pad, \$70,000 - \$80,000; and finally, to build a skateboard park, \$75,000.

Councilman Stimatz stated that the revitalization of the Enfield Park courts comes back to what the best use of the courts would be. He said that he felt the budget should contain a "placeholder" amount of funding; and that Parks and Recreation staff should talk to people to determine what use they preferred. He suggested that if a splash pad is considered, he thought a public-private partnership should be explored.

Councilman Spence commented that he was confused as to where the discussion of a splash park or skateboard park had originated, because when he previously brought up revitalizing the tennis courts, a conversion to basketball courts was the discussion. He stated that people use the existing basketball courts at that location on a regular basis and that usually others are waiting to play basketball while the basketball courts are being used. He said that he did not think the tennis courts needed to be resurfaced and that goals could be installed without a lot of expense to make basketball courts.

Mr. Olson responded that the discussion of additional uses for the Enfield tennis courts had been discussed by the Finance Committee during their meeting on May 21, 2014. He reported that the tennis courts currently have chunks of asphalt missing and that the courts needed a new asphalt surface. He stated that a new surface would allow the court to be used for either basketball or tennis.

Councilman Spence responded that he lives in the area of Enfield Park and he is certain that a splash park or skateboard park would not be used as much as a basketball court.

Councilman King asked if other park space was available for a potential skateboard park in addition to Enfield Park site. Mr. Olson responded that a skateboard park had been contemplated by the tennis courts on Elizabeth Street a number of years ago. Councilman King asked if the Enfield Park site could support both basketball courts and a splash park. Mr. Olson responded that the area is already pretty well programmed with the exception of the property closest to Brooks Avenue. Mr. Olson stated that some years ago it was suggested to have a splash park in an area with greater usage. He pointed out that there is a big difference between a splash park and a splash pad, such as the one currently provided by staff.

Councilman Stimatz stated that a decision did not have to be made until later as long as an appropriation was included in the budget for the work.

Councilman King inquired if there was funding in the budget for the ECSU Homecoming.

Mr. Olson responded that there is no specific line item in the budget for that purpose. He stated that there is a cost allocation for Police Department overtime to work the parade in the budget. Mr. Olson also pointed out that ECSU has utilized TDA funding in the past.

Councilwoman Baker stated that she thought the 2014 allocation of TDA funds is \$18,000 for the ECSU Homecoming, which is an increase from previous years. She said that the Potato Festival received \$3,000 in TDA funding; and the festival brought 30,000 people to the City over three days. She said it was pretty amazing to see the impact of tourism dollars on the community and indicated that she could provide the exact figures from TDA records.

Councilman King asked if the City had ever considered matching the TDA funding.

Councilman Stimatz responded that the TDA funding is the City's funding.

Mr. Olson reported that the City spends over \$10,000 in overtime for the parade and other homecoming functions based on a previous analysis that had been performed.

Councilman King stated that the university is currently going through a time of transition and any boost the City could provide for homecoming or Viking Fest would not only benefit the university, but the City as well. He provided an example of North Carolina A&T's relationship with the City of Greensboro and stated that Greensboro provides funding in addition to tourism money for A&T's homecoming activities. He stated that every business benefits from the increased revenue realized during homecoming and that homecoming should be recognized as a huge tourism draw and not just an event.

Councilman Stimatz inquired if Pasquotank County contributes to the ECSU homecoming activities; and he suggested that the County should share the fiscal burden since the bulk of sales tax revenue is received by the County. He suggested that Councilman King may also wish to bring this matter before the County Commission for their consideration.

Councilman King responded that Councilman Stimatz' suggestion was reasonable, but stated that he felt the City could always do more. Mr. Olson answered that the City is scheduled to receive \$64,000 next year from the TDA; and since all outstanding commitments have been honored, that full amount could be re-allocated as a possible funding source for community support, whether it be the Potato Festival, ECSU, or COA.

Mayor Pro Tem Hummer pointed out that the figures shown in the budget for a new public safety facility are tentative.

Motion was made by Councilman Tony Stimatz, seconded by Councilman Ray Donnelly to accept the changes to the Manager's Budget and call for a public hearing to be held on the fiscal year 2014-2015 budget on June 9, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers. Those voting in favor were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Brooks, Spence, Horton and King. Against: None. The motion passed unanimously.

c. Consideration – Adoption of Resolution in Support of a STEM Curriculum in Pasquotank County.

Mayor Peel recognized City Manager Olson for a review of this item. Mr. Olson explained that during the City Council retreat held on February 28 and March 1, 2014, one of the goals and objectives, which the City Council identified, was the need for a STEM curriculum being taught in Pasquotank County; and it was the directive of the City Council during the retreat that a resolution in support of a STEM curriculum be considered by the Council. He advised that the draft resolution provided only speaks to the value of a STEM curriculum education and does not address who should provide a STEM school curriculum or where it would be provided, which was a point of emphasis discussed during the retreat.

(Clerk notation: At the request of Councilman Tony Stimatz, the discussion of this item is provided in a modified verbatim format.)

Councilman Stimatz: We discussed this at the retreat, and one of the reasons, is that the Airport Authority is also considering a similar resolution. We need to make it very clear – this is not about how it gets done. We are one of the few counties that do not have a STEM curriculum in the county. There are like three out of one hundred - ninety seven other counties have a STEM curriculum. A STEM curriculum is important. If the school board can provide it, that's what we should do – that's where it should be – it should be in our school system. You can use the tag magnet school – however you want to call it – I've seen them called many things in many places. But the Airport Authority is considering it because of aviation and the relationship we have with ECSU, the aviation industry and potential growth in that area - are all important. If we don't have the kids with the education to meet that goal, we have a problem. So, it's not about how this gets done. What we are saying – in fact – I look at it from the school board's perspective - this is support for the idea that if they are going to do it, they have our support. Hopefully the County will pass one, too; and they will pass it along to the school budget. STEM curriculum is a critical aspect to being competitive in the world and within the United States. And, if we are going to have an Aviation Research and Development Park and that grows, we are going to have a lot of job opportunities. Everybody says "our kids need to get the jobs." Unfortunately, you have got to be qualified to get those jobs if you have an interest in it. We can build on that early on. Again, this is not a resolution about how it is going to get done, or who is going to do it, or any of that, this just says we support the idea of a STEM curriculum within Pasquotank County.

Councilman King: During the retreat, I said that I am in full support of a STEM curriculum in Pasquotank County. Anyone that values education and knows the importance of education and knows where we are right now, understands the value and importance of STEM. But the thing we must ask ourselves is, what are we doing? What we always talk about is what the County doesn't do. The truth be told, we don't control the purse strings for education, and we don't have any administrative oversight for education. Yes, it is included in our goals. We want to see STEM in our school system. But, we have to ask ourselves – are we the agency in charge? What are we charged to do? Nowhere in our job description does it state that we are to focus on

education. That's all I'm saying. I didn't run for the Board of Education. If I wanted to focus on this so much, I would have run for the Board of Education or the Board of County Commissioners. You wouldn't see them talking about the police station and you wouldn't see us talking about the social services department, because it's not in our jurisdiction. I'm not saying I don't support the STEM-based curriculum; I just want to let that be known. I support that. But, we all know - anyone that has been following what's going on – everyone that reads the paper – knows that the County is already working on implementing STEM in their current system. Everybody that read the other day's paper knows that at River Road – Mr. Lamar Mizelle, I believe, the principal - is getting ready. One of his goals is to implement STEM curriculum at River Road. And, it is supported by the Board of Education. I think they are already going forward with that, so the question I ask is – why is this even necessary?

Councilman Horton: Thank you Mr. Mayor. I, too, support the STEM curriculum 110%, especially with all the aviation jobs and different opportunities in providing our up and coming leaders with a quality education in science and technology. But, I must concur with Mr. King that I feel that this is something that the County and the Board of Education should address. Not only that, it seems that they are already taking strides to start a STEM curriculum. I think we should not. From my point of view, even if we pass this resolution, the County and the Board of Education or any outside agency - they are still going to move forward. I don't think it's our place – our school system already has the resources, the transportation. Before Pasquotank High School was built, the students attended Northeastern High School – they housed about 2,000 students I think it was. Now they have less than a thousand between both schools. There are classrooms to start this program. Even if I were to support a resolution, it would be with our local school system and pass this on to the County. **With that being said, I make a motion that we do not give a resolution of support to the STEM curriculum, that we pass that on to the County and the Board of Education.**

Councilman King: **Second.**

Councilman Spence: I know we need a STEM in the curriculum, but once again, I think everyone knows how I feel about the County taking care of their own responsibilities and dealing with their own thing. I don't see where this resolution is going to change their mind or convince them to do the STEM curriculum in the school system. It's already been established that they are working on it; so, I just don't see that this resolution will be effective, especially for the City. I think the County should be held accountable for the County. That's just my opinion.

Councilwoman Baker: I was just looking through a couple of resolutions of support here on our iPads - Resolution #10-11 in support of the Northeast North Carolina Initiative to Secure American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Funding. We didn't have anything to do with that, we just supported it. We have many, many things that we support as a Council. It doesn't mean that we have to run it; and it doesn't mean that we have to live it or own it. It just means that we support it. Thank you.

Mayor Pro Tem Hummer: I think right now there is a lot of controversy still surrounding this issue. We see it on the nightly news that there is a lot of misunderstanding or lack of understanding; and I don't think it's a good time for us to sound off on it. Thank you.

Mayor Peel: Any other comments? We have a motion and a second.

Councilman Stimatz: Call for a roll call.

(Mayor Peel polled each Councilor with their votes recorded as follows:)

Councilman Brooks – Yes
Councilman Stimatz – No
Councilman Horton – Yes
Mayor Pro Tem Hummer – Yes
Councilman King – Yes
Councilwoman Baker – No
Councilman Spence – Yes
Councilman Donnelly – No

Mayor Peel: The motion carries.

d. Addition to agenda from Work Session: Recommendation regarding the Community Relations Commission

Mayor Peel recognized Councilman Stimatz for his presentation. Councilman Stimatz reported that a Community Relations Commission (CRC) review group has been created. He stated that the membership includes two County Commissioners, Mr. Cecil Perry and Dr. William Sterritt, two Council persons, himself and Councilman Horton, and three current CRC members. He advised that their goal was to use the results of the Community Vision 2020 effort to modify, codify and improve the effectiveness of the CRC and to gain buy-in by the County Commissioners and the City Council to champion a strategic diversity initiative and support it with commitments of leadership, time and funding.

Councilman Stimatz stated that there were critical questions that have been hanging for some time, which are:

- Do the County Commissioners, the City Council, Mayor and both managers see value in keeping the Commission alive?
- Are they prepared to support and nurture the Commission with leadership, time and funds?
- What are both governing bodies' expectations for the Commission?

He further explained that the review group will create a straw man document that addresses each of the recommendations in Vision 2020 that relate to diversity, community needs and building neighborhoods. These are contained in the Vision 2020 report "Building Strong Families" recommendation number 9, all of the "Championing Diversity" section, "Economic Development" recommendations 2A, 2B, and 5, and

“Education” recommendation 5. He stated that all members of the Council have received a copy of the Vision 2020 document.

He continued by saying that, as part of this effort the CRC will survey its members for their concerns, expectations, and vision for CRC’s future, their ideas for improving the CRC’s effectiveness, and general satisfaction with their experience on the CRC. He stated that the CRC will also conduct a benchmarking effort to discover existing model programs to emulate, best practices and new ideas for championing diversity and effective community bridging events to bring neighborhoods back together so that they are truly neighborhoods.

Councilman Stimatz stated that the Committee will make a presentation to the joint bodies at a special meeting with just the CRC initiative on the agenda. At this meeting the two bodies will be asked to decide what elements of the straw man they would like to go forward with. He said that the committee will formulate this laundry list of recommendations from the results of the Vision 2020 initiative. The result of that meeting will be used to finalize any changes to the CRC by-laws and tasking; and based on the final product, the CRC will commence to execute all tasking to include future budget development, survey and reporting systems, outreach efforts and community events.

Councilman Stimatz reported that one change the review committee would like both governing bodies to take action on immediately is to change the makeup of the membership of the CRC, which is not specifically spelled out in the current by-laws. He said that the following membership is recommended:

- 4 African Americans;
- 4 Caucasians;
- 4 Other Nationalities/Ethnicities;
- 3 members aged 16-30;
- 6 women minimum;
- 6 men minimum;
- 1 ex-officio member from the Elizabeth City Council and the Pasquotank County Commissioners.

He stated that the ex-officio members would sit in on the CRC meetings; and would be there to take information from the group to the governing bodies and vice versa. He suggested that the individuals selected to serve on the CRC should represent diversity with regard to socio-economic status and other issues, such as disabilities. Each appointing body should work to ensure that their appointments reflect this diversity.

Councilman Stimatz reported that the Pasquotank County Commission had already voted to approve the suggested membership change.

Motion was made by Councilman Tony Stimatz, seconded by Councilman Montravias King, to adopt the recommended changes in the CRC by-laws to reflect this membership. Those voting in favor were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Brooks, Spence, Horton and King. Against: None. The motion passed unanimously.

e. Addition to agenda by Councilman King: Golf Cart Initiative

Mayor Peel recognized Councilman King for his comments. Councilman King stated that the initiative of allowing golf carts on City streets was originally brought before the Council on April 14, 2014 by Councilman Spence. He stated that he had time to speak to his constituents, review the document and review how other jurisdictions have worked this matter. He said that the idea seemed very feasible for Elizabeth City.

Motion was made by Councilman Montravias King, seconded by Councilman Kem Spence to call for a Public Hearing on golf cart operation and regulation on local City streets at the June 23, 2014 regular City Council meeting.

Mayor Peel recognized Councilman Brooks for comments on the motion. Councilman Brooks stated that he would never support an ordinance on golf cart operation because the City has young people that ride around on mopeds already weaving in and out of traffic. He said he thought it was the most ludicrous idea he had heard in his life. He reported that his constituents in the Third Ward would never fall for anything like this. He said Elizabeth City has issues that are much more pressing; and the last thing the City needs is another issue. He stated that young people look at things totally different; and it would be too late once someone gets hurt. He stated that the City's liability is too great and he doesn't think the Third Ward constituents that elected him want to have any parts of it. He further stated that for the safety of the citizens of Elizabeth City, this is one of the worst ideas the Council could have.

Councilman Donnelly expressed that he agreed with some of the things stated by Councilman Brooks, but thought that a Public Hearing was the time to hear what constituents have to say. He reported that he was willing to vote to hear what the citizens have to say in the Public Hearing.

Councilman Stimatz reported that a Bill is currently under consideration in the NC House of Representatives concerning the operation of mopeds and allowing municipalities to regulate them. He said that he had been in favor of that for some time and frequently has constituents that ask questions about moped operation. He suggested that at some time, the issue of persons using powered wheelchairs on public streets should be addressed by the City Council in order to require that a visibility flag be used for their safety and the safety of everyone else.

Mayor Peel called for a vote on the motion.

Those voting in favor were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Brooks, Spence, Horton and King. Against: None. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Comments and Inquiries on Non-Agenda Items:

- Councilman Brooks announced that he had traveled to Raleigh that day and had an opportunity speak with Office of Equal Opportunity and Workforce Services Director J. Trent Rawley. He said their conversation centered on on-the-job training in construction. Councilman Brooks stated that Mr. Rawley had offered to address the Council during a Work Session to speak regarding programs available. Councilman Brooks pointed out that Pasquotank County is a Tier I county; and said that he felt the Council should be focused on bringing jobs to the area. Councilman Brooks requested that the City Manager contact Mr. Rawley at some time in the future to determine if he would be available to come during a Work Session of the Council.
- Councilman Stimatz suggested that citizens should pay close attention to activities going on currently in the General Assembly and make their wishes known to our representatives. Of the current issues being considered are House Bill 773, which will revoke the City's ability to conduct rental property inspections; House Bill 1191, which would restrict the City's ability to address a blight on trees located on private property, should something like that occur in the future; and finally is legislation being proposed to repeal the local privilege license tax. He said that these are just three examples of things going on in the Legislature that if our citizens write and call about, it's very powerful and effective.
- Councilman Horton thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and wished a happy belated Memorial Day to all those who have served. He said he concurred with Councilman King that the City should put some funds aside in the budget for ECSU. He asked that City staff look at the recent ruling by the Supreme Court on the free exercise of prayer and bring it back to the Council for discussion and consideration. He stated that he has had complaints regarding sound in the Chambers room from persons who have attended recent meetings.
- Mayor Pro Tem Hummer stated that the Memorial Day Ceremony at West Lawn Cemetery was very moving. She said that when you see the figures of those lost in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is astonishing. She said she was proud to attend the ceremony and remember all those who have so honorably served. She encouraged everyone to be a part of remembering our service men and women.
- Councilman King thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He reported a street light out on Herrington Road across from the Elks Lodge to the City Manager. He thanked Mayor Peel and the members of Council who attended the Memorial Day Ceremony and said that it was good for everyone to get together to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our Country. He thanked staff for their work on the Potato Festival and other events and stated that they are doing a fantastic job in making sure that there is plenty to do in Elizabeth City.

- Councilwoman Baker stated that the Memorial Day Ceremony was well-attended by a growing crowd and thanked Dan Serik for doing a wonderful job in organizing the event. She announced that the Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring the Women of Excellence event on June 4 and stated that City Clerk Vivian White is one of the eighteen nominees. She congratulated the Public Works Department for a phenomenal job setting up, tearing down and cleaning up everything to do with the Potato Festival. She mentioned that she had heard several compliments specifically for Street Superintendent Doug Davis that he was “everywhere, doing anything and everything” that needed to be done. She stated that she had attended the funeral for Captain Bill Barker recently, who after 27 years in the Coast Guard, taught at ECSU and established the curriculum and developed the degree program for the Aviation Program. She said that she would like to see the City recognize him in some way for his efforts in beginning the course work that has brought us where we are today. She stated that she had found three more resolutions adopted by the City Council as follows: in support of the Mid-Currituck Bridge; to oppose fracking; and to support the establishment of a regional agri-science high school in Washington County, North Carolina. She stated that the City has nothing to do with those things, but that the Council unanimously voted to adopt resolutions in support of those particular issues. She said that she is very disappointed that the Council chose not to support a STEM curriculum that Bill Barker had worked so hard on; and stated that we need to train our young people for future jobs that will be available locally.
- Councilman Spence stated that there were several positive things going on in the City and mentioned that FWD Soundstage will present a stage play at ECSU to benefit tornado victims in the City. He also announced an upcoming event at ECSU whereby the gospel group, Virginia Aires will be making a live recording at the Fine Arts Center. He said both events would be awesome and encouraged the public to participate.
- Councilman Donnelly encouraged everyone to keep an eye on the Legislature and what they are doing. He stated that he had an opportunity to attend the West Lawn Memorial Day Service and that it was well-attended and quite moving. He stated that he was glad to be a part of the ceremony.
- Mayor Peel said that he had seen the FWD Soundstage production that Councilman Spence spoke about and that it was an excellent play and he would recommend it to everyone. He thanked Master Sergeant Dan Serik for his wonderful job in organizing the Memorial Day program.

8. Addition to Agenda from Work Session - Closed Session as allowed by NCGS § 143-318.11(a)(5) – Acquisition of Property:

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Anita Hummer, seconded by Councilman Montravias King, to go into Closed Session as allowed by NCGS § 143-318.11(a)(5) – Acquisition of Property. Those voting in favor were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Brooks, Spence, Horton and King. Against: None. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Peel declared a five minute recess at 8:50 p.m. after which the Council entered Closed Session.

Motion was made by Councilman Kem Spence, seconded by Councilman Michael Brooks, to come out of Closed Session and return to Open Session. Those voting in favor were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Brooks, Spence, Horton and King. Against: None. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilman Darius Horton, seconded by Councilman Kem Spence, to direct City staff to begin negotiations to purchase the JC Penny building. Those voting in favor were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Brooks, Spence, Horton and King. Against: None. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilman Tony Stimatz, seconded by Councilman Kem Spence, to authorize the City Manager to negotiate for the purchase of Parcel # 145-1 and Parcel # 145-3A and finalize the options on the other parcels. Those voting in favor were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz, Brooks, Spence, Horton and King. Against: None. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Adjournment:

There being no further business to be discussed, Mayor Peel adjourned the meeting at 9:36 p.m.

Joseph W. Peel
Mayor

Vivian D. White, NCCMC
City Clerk