

**City Council Work Session  
May 27, 2014**

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City met in work session on Tuesday, May 27, 2014 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 Kem Spence (*arrived at 5:50 p.m.*)  
Councilman Montravias King (*arrived at 5:58 p.m.*)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilman Michael Brooks  
Councilman Darius Horton

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  
Human Resources Director Katherine Felton  
Public Utilities Director Paul Fredette  
Fire Chief Larry Mackey  
Parks and Recreation Director Bobbi White  
City Clerk Vivian White

The City Council work session was called to order by Mayor Joe Peel at 5:30 p.m. Mayor Peel welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave the invocation, after which all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1. Approval of Agenda:**

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

**Motion was made by Councilwoman Jean Baker, seconded by Councilman Tony Stimatz to move the Closed Session scheduled for the Work Session to the Regular Meeting to allow more Council members to be present. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer and Stimatz. Against: None. The motion carried. (*Spence and King had not yet arrived.*)**

**Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Anita Hummer, seconded by Councilwoman Jean Baker, to approve the agenda as amended. Those voting in favor were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer and Stimatz. Against: None. The motion carried. (Spence and King 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. Report by CRC Review Committee – Councilman Tony Stimatz:**

Mayor Peel recognized Councilman Stimatz to give his report. Using a PowerPoint presentation, Councilman Stimatz provided highlights of the Community Relations Commission (CRC) Review Group's work to date.

He stated that the committee's 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 focus 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 are three critical questions that need to be considered, 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 the Council's and Commissioners' expectations for the CRC?

He further explained that the review group will create a straw man document that addresses each of the recommendations of 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 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 would like to make a presentation to the Council and County Commission during a special meeting with only the CRC initiative on the agenda. During this meeting, both governing bodies will be asked to decide if they want a CRC, what they want it to do, and if they are willing to pay for it, in particular funding for what they want the CRC to do.

He said that he had given this same presentation to the Board of County Commissioners and that they had acted on the recommended change in the by-laws of the Commission as it relates to membership. He suggested that this matter most likely should be referred to the Council's regular meeting in order for more members to be present to vote on the recommendation.

Councilman Stimatz reported that the membership of the CRC is currently not spelled out in the by-laws, and stated that the following membership make-up is recommended by the Review Committee:

- 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 Donnelly asked if the six men and six women were inclusive of the four African Americans and Caucasians. Councilman Stimatz responded that the gender make-up was in addition, and could be any ethnic background.

Councilman Stimatz stated that the CRC had put together a tentative budget for this year; and that the City's Finance Committee had included it in the budget for Council's consideration. He said that the County had been unwilling to fund the additional \$800 being requested by the CRC. He stated that it was a reasonable budget and included a youth conference in the public schools. He pointed out that if the two governing bodies

wanted to sponsor or coordinate additional activities or events, additional funding would be required.

**Motion was made by Councilwoman Jean Baker, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Anita Hummer to place on the agenda for tonight's regular meeting a consideration of changing the by-laws of the CRC as recommended. Those voting in favor were: Baker, Donnelly, Hummer, Stimatz and Spence. Against: None. The motion carried. (King had not yet arrived.)**

Councilman Stimatz stated that, from a personal standpoint, he could not stress enough how important the CRC is to our community; and how important it is for the City Council and County Commissioners to use the CRC to do things that the community needs with regard to building bridging events to bring the community together and creating true neighborhoods where neighbors are really neighbors. He said that for the small investment, the CRC has already accomplished a lot and bears tremendous consideration.

#### **4. Committee Reports:**

- a) EC-PC Economic Development Commission: Mayor Pro Tem Hummer advised that the Commission met the previous Wednesday with most of the discussion about how successful and enjoyable the NC Potato Festival was.
- b) Central Communications Advisory Board: Councilman Spence had no report.
- c) Fireman's Relief Fund Board: Councilman Brooks was absent from the meeting.
- d) NC Eastern Municipal Power Agency: Mr. Olson reported that the Power Agency meeting had been canceled because the Asset Purchase Agreement and Wholesale Power Agreement were not yet complete for the Board to review. He said he anticipated a special meeting to be scheduled within a week to ten days to review the final version of those documents.
- e) Elizabeth City Downtown, Inc.: Councilman Donnelly reported that the Potato Festival chairpersons would be coming before the Council during the June 9, 2014 meeting to provide a report. He stated that over 30,000 people attended the festival over the three days with very limited, if any, problems. He thanked all those who helped with the festival for a job well done.
- f) Elizabeth City Area Chamber of Commerce Board: Mayor Peel reported that a ribbon cutting was scheduled for the former Microtel that is re-opening as a Best Western on Halstead Boulevard. He encouraged anyone seeking employment to attend the job fair for the new solar farm enterprise being held at the Fairfield Marriott; and said that the company is seeking 300-400 employees to help build the farm. He commended Pasquotank County for working with the developers of the solar farm to bring additional jobs to the area.

- g) Finance Committee: Mayor Pro Tem Hummer reported that the committee met and made a number of recommendations for the Council's consideration during tonight's regular meeting agenda.
- h) Parks and Recreation Advisory Board: Councilman Horton was absent from the meeting.
- i) Elizabeth City/Pasquotank County Airport Authority: Councilman Stimatz reported that the Authority meeting had been rescheduled and he would provide a report for the Council during the next Council meeting.
- j) Storm Water Drainage Advisory Board: Councilman Stimatz stated that a meeting was being scheduled for June to discuss projects that could be considered for the next fiscal year.
- k) Tourism Development Authority: Councilwoman Baker stated that a new tourism website should be up and running in about 60 days. She reported that the harbor cam had been updated and is available on the Discover Elizabeth City website. She said that 434 room nights had been recorded as a direct result of the Potato Festival for Friday, Saturday and Sunday. She reminded everyone about The Great Race event that would be coming to Elizabeth City for the first time ever on June 25, 2014. She said that the vintage cars will arrive around lunch at Waterfront Park and invited everyone to come and see the cars and talk to the drivers. She detailed several upcoming events such as Movies on the Green, Splash Week, a Low Country Boil and Chair Auction to benefit Arts of the Albemarle, Port Discover's Science of Beer event, First Friday Artwalk, a Victorian Exposition at the Southern Hotel, and Taste of the Albemarle.

## **5. Adjournment:**

There being no further business to be discussed, Mayor Peel adjourned the meeting at 6:10 p.m.

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Joseph W. Peel  
Mayor

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Vivian D. White, NCCMC  
City Clerk