

**City Council Special Meeting  
June 2, 2014**

A Special Meeting of the City Council was called and duly advertised for Monday, June 2, 2014 at 6 p.m. 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 Montravias King

MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilman Michael Brooks  
Councilman Kem Spence  
Councilman Darius Horton

OTHERS PRESENT: City Manager Rich Olson  
City Clerk Vivian White  
Assistant to the City Manager Angela Cole  
Human Resources Director Katherine Felton

The Special Meeting of the City Council was called to order by Mayor Joe Peel at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Peel welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave the invocation, after which all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1. Agenda Approval:**

Mayor Peel called for approval of the agenda.

**Motion was made by Councilman Tony Stimatz, seconded by Councilman Montravias King, to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

**2. Consideration – Adoption of Resolution Opposing Any Action by the North Carolina General Assembly to Require the UNC Board of Governors to Study the Feasibility of Dissolving or Developing a Plan to Dissolve Elizabeth City State University:**

Mayor Peel called for discussion regarding this consideration.

*(Clerk notation: At the request of Councilman Montravias King, the following discussion is provided in a modified verbatim format.)*

*Councilman Donnelly:* Can we read the draft resolution we have here for the record?

*Mayor Peel:* I would be happy to. (Clerk notation: Mayor Peel read the entire resolution, which follows below.)

*Councilman Donnelly:* For the record, I'm very hopeful that this Council now recognizes the value of supporting educational and economic opportunities through the passage of resolutions. I find that very encouraging tonight and I am here in support of this resolution.

*Councilman Stimatz:* I'd like to thank the Mayor for his proactive and decisive leadership on this issue. From the first announcement, he quickly and effectively reached out to key persons and legislators to have the proposed action of the Senate reversed. He was successful in his efforts. In addition, it was his initiative to have this resolution drafted, and to call this Special Meeting to clearly lay out our concerns. This, despite Council's past reluctance to get involved in things that we do not have oversight on or budget control of. The role of a leader is to stand up when things are happening and stake out a position and let people know what we are going to do. I want to thank Mayor Peel for doing that.

*Councilman King:* I, too, would like to take the time to thank all of you, our concerned citizens, residents of Elizabeth City, Pasquotank County, ECSU students and alumni, for coming out tonight in support of the City Council's effort to pass this resolution "Opposing Any Action by the North Carolina General Assembly to Require the UNC Board of Governors to Study the Feasibility of Dissolving or Developing a Plan to Dissolve Elizabeth City State University". Furthermore, I, too, thank our Mayor for his leadership, his strong leadership in working quickly to defuse this situation. Now is not the time for us to play politics. It's time for us to pull together. Unfortunately, some people are still trying to divide us – still trying to take us back rather than move forward. I'm ready to go forward, move forward – what's done in the past, is done – and it's time for us to move forward for the sake of the City. It's time for us to move forward for the sake of the University. It's time for us to move forward for the sake of the entire region.

*Mayor Pro Tem Hummer:* I would also like to thank our Mayor for taking a leadership role in this most important issue. It was time to let those in Raleigh know that we, here in Northeastern North Carolina, play a large role in economic development for our whole state. It would have had an un-imaginable negative impact on everything we do here – our local restaurants would close, our aviation program would be in jeopardy - and you can go on and on. I would like to also thank the Councilors who made the trip to Raleigh to let them hear from us on behalf of all of you. Thank you.

**Motion was made by Councilman Tony Stimatz, seconded by Councilman Montravias King, to adopt the following resolution as presented to Council. The motion carried unanimously.**

**RESOLUTION# 2014 – 06-01**

**Opposing Any Action by the North Carolina General Assembly  
to Require the UNC Board of Governors to Study the Feasibility of Dissolving  
or Developing a Plan to Dissolve Elizabeth City State University**

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 744 entitled “The Current Operations and Capital Improvements Appropriations Act of 2014” reads in Section 11.6 as follows: “The Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina shall study the feasibility of dissolving any constituent institution whose fall full time equivalent student enrollment declined by more than twenty percent (20%) between the 2010-2011 fiscal year and the 2013-2014 fiscal year and shall develop a plan for its dissolution. The Board of Governors shall report its findings and recommendations, including the plan for dissolution, to the 2015 General Assembly”; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth City State University is not specifically named in Section 11.6 of Senate Bill 744; but it is the only campus in the 16-member University of North Carolina system that meets the stated criteria; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth City State University was established by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1891 and plays an important role as one of the country’s historically black colleges and universities; and

WHEREAS, it is acknowledged and agreed that Elizabeth City State University has suffered an enrollment decline in recent years, which has led to a significant budget shortfall; however, major steps have been taken to address the budget challenges and progress is being made under the direction of capable leadership; and

WHEREAS, Elizabeth City State University leadership has devised a plan alongside University of North Carolina System governance to increase its enrollment; and the University is currently in the midst of conducting a search for a permanent Chancellor; therefore, the University must be granted the necessary time to reverse its downward enrollment trend of recent years and move forward with its critical mission to provide quality educational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, it must also be properly appreciated that in addition to its role of providing educational opportunity to a populace that might otherwise not be able to attain a higher education and the better life afforded by that education, Elizabeth City State University has been and continues to be a major economic engine for an oft-forgotten, economically depressed Northeastern North Carolina by creating, as the region’s third-largest employer, \$118 million in output sales, \$83 million in gross regional product and \$59 million in labor income; and

WHEREAS, local government officials are currently engaged in major economic development efforts, which will require collaboration with Elizabeth City State University to provide the necessary training for high-paying jobs in a blossoming local aviation industry; and

WHEREAS, a large majority of K-12 teachers hired in Northeastern North Carolina are educated at Elizabeth City State University; and

WHEREAS, it is the finding of the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City that the simple exercise of performing the proposed study would stymie the University’s efforts to increase enrollment, engage a chancellor, retain qualified and dedicated instructors and staff and grow the University as is desired by all concerned; and further

would do irreparable harm to the economy of Elizabeth City, Pasquotank County and Northeastern North Carolina.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City that any action by the North Carolina General Assembly to require the UNC Board of Governors to study the feasibility of dissolving or developing a plan to dissolve Elizabeth City State University is vehemently opposed.

ADOPTED this the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of June 2014.

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Joseph W. Peel  
Mayor

ATTEST:

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Vivian D. White, NCCMC  
City Clerk

**3. Adjournment:**

There being no further business to be discussed, Mayor Peel adjourned the meeting at 6:19 p.m.

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Joseph W. Peel  
Mayor

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Vivian D. White, NCCMC  
City Clerk