

MONDAY-5:30 P.M.

AUGUST 27, 2007

WORK SESSION

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City held its monthly work session on the above date and time in the City Council Chambers of the Municipal Administration Building with Mayor C. L. Foster presiding. Council members in attendance were: J. M. Baker, M. E. Brooks, L. A. Hummer, B. S. Meggs, E. K. Rivers, D. K. Stallings, J. A. Stimatz and J. B. Walton. Staff members attending were: City Manager R. C. Olson, City Clerk D. S. Pierce-Tamplen, City Attorney W. H. Morgan, Deputy Clerk V. D. White, Finance Director S. E. Blanchard, Inspections Director S. E. Ward, Human Resource Director K. W. Felton, Parks and Recreation Director J. D. Overman, Planning Director J. C. Brooks, Chief of Police C. E. Crudup and Electric Superintendent K. F. Clow.

Mayor C. L. Foster opened the meeting by welcoming those in attendance. He gave the invocation after which Planning Director J. C. Brooks led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

1} APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Mayor Foster called for approval of the prepared agenda.

A motion was made by Councilwoman J. M. Baker, seconded by Councilwoman B. S. Meggs to approve the agenda as presented. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Baker, Meggs, Brooks, Hummer, Rivers, Stallings, Stimatz and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.

2} PRESENTATION – COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION:

Mayor Foster called upon Dr. Reed Adams for the Executive Summary from the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank County Community Relations Commission.

Dr. Adams, along with Dr. Hezekiah Brown and Rev. Lena Lawrence presented a final report that reflected several changes that the Council requested when the preliminary report was provided last year. Mainly, an effort was made to include a broader cross-section of minorities in the sampling process. He said that tonight he brings good news. This community has positive opinions about racial and ethnic relations. The members of the Commission designed a questionnaire about racial and ethnic relations in the community. We secured \$10,000 from Z, Smith Reynolds Foundation for a research design to study the nature and extend of such problems. There were some concerns about the disparity with some

groups in the community so we continued our samplings focusing entirely on the African-American community in this area. We ended up with a sampling well over 500. One of the major things that we found was that the community believes we have made some major advances in terms of racial and ethnic relations over the past year. The community saw hope and a lessening of discrimination in the major areas that we asked. They were employment, housing, education, medical care and public safety. The end results include six recommendations from the commission. They are as follows:

1} We should all openly acknowledge the fundamental values of our community as brotherly love and acceptance, the rejection of racial and ethnic isolation, and the endorsement of diversity of society as desirable and noble. This can be in part accomplished by an annual proclamation by the City Council and the Board of County Commissioners affirming such values.

2} Establish a method of communication among the major civic, social and religious institutions so as to advance diversity and extend the resources and rewards of all such entities to everyone regardless of race or ethnic group.

3} Create a research component within the Community Relations Commission. That research body should further explore on an ongoing basis a description of the social structure and the value structures of the community as they relate to the nature and quality of life. The CRC Research Office, if established, should annually approach a granting agency for funding to replicate the State of the Community Report.

4} Some groups and institutions, including those civic and religious ones, provide insular protection from diversity. The churches and civic groups should revisit their moral foundations and ask themselves if their own racial and ethnic diversity reflects the teaching of their founders.

5} The CRC and the City and County Governments should continue to emphasize the importance of the Witherspoon/Harris award to recognize important contributors to the community.

6} The two ministerial associations should interact and interface more so as to eliminate duplication inconsistent with racial and ethnic diversity. Religious groups should interact more with groups other than their own.

3} PRESENTATION – LOAD MANAGEMENT SWITCHES:

Mayor Foster called upon Ricky Albertson, Load Control Specialist for the presentation.

Mr. Albertson stated that the Load Management Division was established with its purpose to lower the wholesale demand cost and thereby hold down future electric rates. Participants received a \$2 credit for each water heater switch and \$4 credit for each central air conditioner switch. Load Management was an all voluntary program. Private contractors installed the load management switches. In 1991 Load Management personnel began to install the switches. In 1992 the participants' load management credits were increased to \$4 for each water heater switch and \$6 for each central air conditioner switch. In 2005 Load Management switch installation became mandatory to receive more than two extensions annually electric bills. Switch installation was also mandatory for all new construction within the city limits. In 2007 Load Management switch installation became mandatory for all customers and credits were discontinued.

Residential water heaters and central air conditioners are the largest single appliance electric users in households. On the average this amount to 35% of the customers electric bill. 76% of customers have electric water heaters while 53% have central air conditioners. These can be controlled without inconvenience to the customer. During the winter months the load management is on only the coldest days of the month from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and averages 5 days a month. The summer is on only the hottest days of the month from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and again only averages 5 days a month.

As of August 23, 2007, the Load Management Division has installed 5823 water heater switches and 3952 air conditioner switches. 44% of customers have W/H switch and 31% of the customers have a/c switches. Yearly savings to the City is estimated at \$833,720.00 with no credit given to the customer.

The annual savings and pay back is estimated for the water heater is \$108.53 with a pay back estimated at 1.5 years with no credit. Estimated annual savings for air conditioner is \$51.25 with a pay back estimated at 3 years with no credit.

4} PRESENTATION – UPDATE ON RENTAL HOUSING INSPECTION PROGRAM:

Mayor Foster called upon Inspection Director S. E. Ward for comments.

Mr. Ward stated that the Elizabeth City Minimum Housing Code was implemented in the early 1970's. Chapter 7, Rental Housing Code was adopted and added to the Minimum Housing Code on September 5, 2005. The significant changes were: Rental property owners are required to pay a \$25 registration/licensing fee each year, per dwelling unit; requiring carbon monoxide detectors if the dwelling has any gas, oil or wood fuel burning equipment or appliances; requiring screened windows and doors if the dwelling does not have central air conditioning and attics shall have a minimum R-19 insulation.

The registration fees collected during 2005-2006 were \$74,725 for 2,989 units. For 2007 – July 31, 2007, \$71,775 fees have been collected for 2,871 units.

Some of the most prevalent violations cited are: absence of/inoperable smoke detectors, absence of carbon monoxide detectors, no backflow prevention on exterior faucets, no screens on windows and lack of ongoing maintenance for the units.

5} ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, Mayor Foster called for a motion to adjourn.

A motion was made by Councilman D. K. Stallings, seconded by Councilman E. K. Rivers to adjourn the meeting. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Stallings, Rivers, Baker, Brooks, Hummer, Meggs, Stimatz and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.

Mayor Foster adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

Dianne S. Pierce-Tamplen, MMC
City Clerk

Charles L. Foster
Mayor