

MONDAY – 8:00 P.M.

DECEMBER 14, 2009

CITY COUNCIL (2)

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City held a meeting on the above date and time at the K. E. White Graduate Center located at 1704 Weeksville Road with Mayor R. A. McLean presiding. Those members of Council attending were: J. M. Baker, M. E. Brooks, L. A. Hummer, R. E. King, L. Hill-Lawrence, B. S. Meggs, J. A. Stimatz and J. B. Walton. City staff members in attendance were: City Manager R. C. Olson, City Clerk D. S. Pierce-Tamplen, City Attorney W. H. Morgan, Human Resource Director F. W. Felton, Inspections Director S. E. Ward, Police Chief C. E. Crudup, Fire Chief L. M. Mackey, Electric Director K. F. Clow, Finance Director S. E. Blanchard and Public Utilities Director P. A. Fredette.

Mayor McLean established a quorum was present and called the meeting to order. He led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

1} APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Mayor Atkinson called for the pleasure of Council regarding the prepared agenda.

Councilwoman L. Hill-Lawrence asked to ***add to the agenda the recently passed Taxicab Ordinance.***

Having no other addition or deletion, Mayor McLean called for a motion of approval of the amended agenda.

A motion was made by Councilwoman L. Hill-Lawrence, seconded by Councilwoman L. A. Hummer to approve the agenda as presented to include the above noted item. Those voting in favor of the motion were: L. Hill-Lawrence, L. A. Hummer, J. M. Baker, M. E. Brooks, R. E. King, B. S. Meggs, J. A. Stimatz and J. B. Walton. Against: None. Motion Carried.

2} RECOGNITION OF RETIRING MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL:

Mayor McLean presented a plaque to Mayor Stephen S. Atkinson and Councilman E. K. Rivers for their dedication and hard work exhibited by each of them during their tenure on Council. Each thanked the citizens for being given the chance to serve in this capacity.

3} COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

There was no one present that wished to speak under this section of the agenda.

4} SPECIAL COMMENTS:

Those wishing to make special comments were: Mrs. Nealie B. McLean, Wanda Hunt McLean, Dr. Jimmy Jenkins, Dr. Faleese Jenkins, Dr. Willie Gilchrist, Dr. Clay Perkins, Dr. Anthony Sharpe and Ms. Patrise Holley.

5} TAXICAB ORDINANCE:

Mayor McLean called upon Councilwoman L. Hill-Lawrence for comments.

Ms. Hill-Lawrence stated that after much consideration she felt that this item needed further clarification and discussion.

A motion was made by Councilwoman L. Hill-Lawrence, seconded by Councilwoman L. A. Hummer to repeal the Taxicab Ordinance that was adopted at the December 8, 2009 Council meeting; and further move to place this item on the agenda for the January 11, 2010 scheduled City Council meeting for discussion.

Councilman J. A. Stimatz stated that we cannot vote on a motion to repeal the ordinance. All we can do is vote on the motion to put it on the agenda. Isn't that correct? To repeal the motion we have to have a public hearing, have the change in the ordinance, etc.

Mr. Morgan said it was his understanding from a discussion the City Clerk had with a member of the Institute of Government today that Council is within its right to vote to repeal the ordinance tonight. If it does not pass with a two thirds majority vote it will need a second reading. The second vote on the second reading could pass with a simple majority. Council may repeal the ordinance tonight and may put it on the January 11th agenda.

Those voting in favor of the motion were: L. Hill-Lawrence, L. A. Hummer, M. E. Brooks, J. B. Walton. Against: J. M. Baker, R. E. King, B. S. Meggs and J. A. Stimatz. Mayor McLean broke the time with a yes vote. Motion carried.

6} ELECTION OF MAYOR PRO TEM:

Mayor McLean stated he would accept nomination for the position of Mayor Pro Tem.

Councilman J. A. Stimatz nominated Councilman R. E. King as Mayor Pro Tem.

Councilman J. B. Walton nominated Councilwoman L. A. Hummer as Mayor Pro Tem.

Hearing no other nominations, Mayor McLean closed the nominations.

Those voting in favor of Councilwoman L. A. Hummer were: Brooks, Hill-Lawrence, L. A. Hummer and J. B. Walton.

Those voting in favor of Councilman R. E. King were: J. M. Baker, R. E. King, B. S. Meggs and J. A. Stimatz.

Mayor R. A. McLean broke the tie by voting for Councilwoman L. A. Hummer as the Mayor Pro Tem.

Mayor Pro Tem Hummer stated she would like to thank her colleagues for placing their confidence in her by electing her as Mayor Pro Tem. It is a job that she will not take lightly. She also thanked the people in the Second Ward who have supported her all these years. She would like to thank her husband, Bob Hummer for supporting her and for allowing her to give most of her time to the City. When he agreed to move her back to her hometown she told him how nice the people were here and she doesn't think he has been disappointed.

7} UTILITY RATES:

Councilman J. B. Walton stated at this time of economic downslide and everybody is feeling the crunch of not having enough. Some of us have more than others and some of us need to help those that don't have what they need. The reason that he is serving is to help those who cannot help themselves. At this time we feel that we need to help those that can't help themselves.

A motion was made by Councilman J. B. Walton, second by Councilman R. E. King to instruct city staff to present options to the City Council to reflect a revision to the current 2009-2010 Operating Budget to reflect a reduction in the electric rates to be effective with the February 2010 billing.

Councilman Stimatz asked he if heard a percentage reduction? He thinks that staff would appreciate what is on the table and what is off the table. For instance personnel, salaries and positions are fair game.

Councilman Walton replied everything is an option.

Those voting in favor of the motion were: Walton, King, Brooks, Hill-Lawrence, Hummer and Meggs. Against: Baker and Stimatz. Motion carried.

8} REMARKS:

Councilman Brooks said he had no remarks.

Councilman Stimatz said he would like to say that it is his wish that this council and this mayor are the most successful council and mayor that this City has ever had. This City deserves to be able to grow and progress. He says this all the time, that you come to the podium and you hold us accountable and you don't let us off the hook.

Councilwoman Meggs said she would like to say that she appreciates the fact that this is her third time on Council and that she will work just as hard as she has worked the other four years. She doesn't know of a place in this world that she would rather be than she had here in Elizabeth City. It is the dearest and best place that God has ever made.

Mayor Pro Tem Hummer said she would like to say again thank you from the bottom of her heart.

Councilman Walton said this is going to be the best council. What started it all is because you have a spirit here tonight. Council should not leap and leave church after the invocation. There are two issues that have happened tonight. He doesn't have any fear of anything but God. Tonight, he didn't fear helping Anita Hummer Mayor Pro Tem. That is something that he wanted to do in his heart. He didn't fear trying to attack electric rates. Fear is something that got us into a bind. We should lead that fear away from us. Fear is nothing but false evidence appearing real. He believes that this Council is so smart that he will miss Kirk because he is very persuasive and he can do great things but we have people on this same council that can do the same thing.

Councilwoman Baker said she would like to thank all the citizens that have supported her. This is her fifth term. She finds it hard to believe that she has been in Elizabeth City for fifteen years already. She would like to especially thank the citizens for the opportunity and Council the opportunity to be Mayor Pro Tem for the last two years. It has been an honor to serve this City in the many functions and ribbon cuttings, welcomes, speeches on behalf of the City and the Mayor. Her last official act was on Saturday at ECSU graduation of 189 students and it was very, very nice. She was very proud to serve Elizabeth City

in that capacity. Anita, she hopes that you continue to do a good job with it and she is sure that she will and it is a lot of work as you know as you have done it a couple of times before. It is not to be taken lightly and she is much honored to have been in that capacity. She hopes too that this Council will continue to do the best things for the City, all of Elizabeth City. We are a business and we have to run it like that and that is what she has been fighting for a long time and she will continue to do that and work with everybody.

Councilman King said it is a pleasure and honor to be serving for another two years. As the Mayor said we don't always agree but we can agree to disagree. We are going to work together. He thinks everyone on Council will work together and we have the opportunity to work together. It takes more than just the Third Ward it takes all Wards to come together for the betterment for the City. We need to stop fighting and pledge to get down to business for the City.

Councilman Brooks said he will say something now. He has a lot of sermons on what he has just heard. He wants to thank everybody for their support in the Third Ward. When he was on Council previously he thinks most people know him as a fighter for the people. He thinks what we have failed to take under consideration in the past that everyone out there is our boss. We are servants. He is telling everyone out there to keep in mind we are not above you as you are all above us. Whenever you see one of your representatives not doing according to your wishes, hold them accountable. He thanked everyone again.

Councilwoman Hill-Lawrence said she is just happy. She wants to thank everyone gathered here tonight to share in this inauguration. It has been a joy and pleasure for all of us who are here. Most of you who know her know that she is an objective person and she looks at things objectively. She does not rush to judgment. The thing that she plans to do on this Council is to evaluate everything that is done and everything that is said. We are going to have a good time making the right decisions. The other thing that she wants to say is all of us have to be commanding communicators. We have to speak with a voice of command.

Mayor McLean thanked the caterers for tonight, Catering by Annette, Ms. Annette Gregory. He wants to thank Dr. Gilchrist for letting us use this wonderful facility. We didn't have to pay for this.

Mayor McLean stated that Elizabeth City is a wonderful City. You saw tonight that sometimes he will have to break ties. He doesn't like to break a tie but that is something that he will do. We want to be on the same page and doing the right things for our youth and the citizens of Elizabeth City. We are going to reduce that light bill because that is something that we have to do. We can't afford for our citizens to pay 500+ utilities bill. We must figure some way to

stop it. Working together we will do just that. We have to take care of our own and working with this Council that is what we are going to do. We are going to work together. We are going to fight a little bit but we are going to work together because that is what we have to do. He doesn't want to take away anything from the previous Council. Mayor Atkinson and Mayor Gardner did a wonderful job. Here again he is hoping that he will be able to do the kind of job that they did while they were Mayor. We are going to work extremely hard. Councilwoman Baker we are going to get it together. Councilman Walker we are going to keep it going. Councilman King we are going to also keep it going. Councilwoman Lawrence we will keep it going. Mayor Pro Tem Hummer we are going to work things out and we are going to work together. Councilwoman Meggs we are going to work together also. Councilman Stimatz we are going to work together. Councilman Brooks is out in the field and he has known Dianne Pierce-Tamplen for a lot of years. She is a magnificent City Clerk. Bill Morgan has been with us for a long time and we appreciate the work that he has done. The newspaper asked him what he was going to do about Rich Olson. He feels he is a person that can get things done that we need to have done. We are certainly going to work with him to do that. We are going to give everybody an opportunity.

He is overwhelmed by his family, friends and people that supported him. He can't name all the names but he wants everyone to know that he appreciates everyone that came out tonight and God Bless Elizabeth City.

9} ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, Mayor McLean adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Dianne S. Pierce-Tamplen, MMC
City Clerk

Roger A. McLean
Mayor