

**MINUTES OF WORK SESSION
OF THE NEWPORT NEWS CITY COUNCIL
HELD IN THE 10TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
2400 WASHINGTON AVENUE
January 12, 2016
4:30 p.m.**

PRESENT: Herbert H. Bateman, Jr.; Sandra N. Cherry, D. Min.; Robert S. Coleman; McKinley L. Price, DDS; Sharon P. Scott; Tina L. Vick; and Dr. Patricia P. Woodbury ----- 7

ABSENT: None ----- 0

OTHERS PRESENT: James M. Bourey; Collins L. Owens; Mabel Washington Jenkins; Cynthia Rohlf; Alan Archer; Wanda Pierre; Darlene Bradberry; Lisa Cipriano; Florence Kingston; Carol Meredith; Reed Fowler; Sheila McAllister; Everett Skipper; Jennifer Walker; and Theresa Clift

I. Closed Meeting

(4:35 p.m. – 6:03 p.m.)

II. Comments/Ideas/Suggestions

Mr. James M. Bourey, City Manager, advised that progress continued to be made in obtaining New Market Tax Credits for Jim's Local Market in the Southeast Community. He commended Mrs. Florence Kingston, Director, and staff, Department of Development, for their work on the project. The credits would provide a \$2 million benefit to the City.

Councilwoman Cherry inquired about the KSE Youth Development Basketball League sponsored by Kevin Swann Enterprises. Assistant City Manager Alan Archer replied that the Basketball League began in January, with their first game commencing the weekend of January 2, 2016.

Councilwoman Cherry requested a game schedule with noted locations. She inquired about the number of children from the City of Newport News who participated in the Basketball League. Assistant City Manager Archer stated he would look into the matter and report back to City Council.

Councilwoman Cherry questioned who was responsible for maintaining the gateway sign and landscaping at 39th Street and Chestnut Avenue. Assistant City Manager Rohlf believed it was a project initiated by the Newport News Green Foundation and the Chestnut Avenue Association. She stated she would look into the matter and report back to City Council.

Councilwoman Cherry inquired about an e-mail sent to City Council regarding the logo change for the Department of Waterworks. She recalled that the name change from the Department of Public Utilities to Waterworks did not facilitate the need to change the department's logos on its vehicles,

stationery and uniforms. City Manager Bourey replied that the e-mail was totally fallacious, ridiculous, and absurd. He stated the City was not spending millions of dollars to change the Department of Waterworks logo. Ultimately, one logo was desired for the City, and staff was looking at ways to transition to a unified logo. Millions of dollars would not be spent to replace the Waterworks logo.

Councilwoman Cherry inquired about the need for the change, and indicated she needed clarity.

Councilwoman Woodbury indicated that she had asked the City Manager about the matter in September 2015, but had never received a response. She advised that she had heard that Waterworks staff members had been told, by the City Manager, that their logo would be changed.

Councilwoman Woodbury asked for a background on the Department of Waterworks. She understood that Waterworks was a separate entity under the umbrella of the City. She voiced concern about what an enterprise meant, what it had been, and the City's commitment to Waterworks as they provided services to surrounding jurisdictions.

City Manager Bourey replied that Waterworks was owned by the City of Newport News, although they sold water to surrounding jurisdictions. He stated Waterworks operated as a separate Enterprise Fund that was owned by the City.

Councilwoman Cherry inquired about the purpose for changing the logo. City Manager Bourey replied that consistency was needed citywide.

Councilwoman Cherry inquired whether the City Manager made the decision to change the logo. City Manager Bourey replied that the decision to change the logo was decided many years ago but never implemented. He stated the change would normally be an operational decision; however, City Council's input was welcome, and he would be happy to share the information.

Councilwoman Scott inquired whether it was an operational decision to change the City logo. City Manager Bourey replied that it was an operational decision to establish a City logo.

Vice Mayor Coleman stated that he had witnessed several different logos and lettering on City vehicles. He stated older vehicles had the standard seal on the side, while newer vehicles had different logos and lettering. He agreed with the City Manager that consistency was needed.

Councilwoman Woodbury stated the logo for the Department of Waterworks had always been the same. City Manager Bourey disagreed that the logo for the Department of Waterworks had always been the same.

Councilwoman Scott stated that it had been her experience, since being a member of City Council, that it was not an administrative decision to change the City's logo. She stated such matters came before City Council and there was discussion. It should not be a decision that was arbitrarily made, with City Council hearing about the issue from the public. City Manager Bourey assured that staff would not arbitrarily make such a decision, without sharing the information with City Council.

Councilwoman Scott voiced concern that City Council heard about the logo change from the public, rather than from the City Manager. City Manager Bourey replied that he could not help that City Council received misinformation from the public.

Councilwoman Scott disagreed, as the City Manager did not share such information with members of City Council. She reiterated her concern that the public was contacting City Council and providing them with information that they should have received from the City Manager.

Councilwoman Woodbury stated she became aware of the matter from staff of the Department of Waterworks; however, she would not disclose the names of the employees. City Manager Bourey stated that the staff members had communicated misinformation, pure and simple.

Councilwoman Woodbury asked that the City Manager share the correct information. City Manager Bourey replied that there was no new logo; staff had an idea that they would share with City Council as to the need for consistency citywide, as related to a logo. There were no plans towards implementation of a new logo.

Councilwoman Cherry inquired whether there was potential for the logo to be the City seal. City Manager Bourey replied that would be something that could be discussed.

Councilwoman Scott noted that the logo, "Where Great Things Are Happening", had not been out very long. She inquired whether the proposed new logo would replace that. City Manager Bourey explained that the "Where Great Things Are Happening" logo was developed with the intention of replacing everything in the City, although he was not a part of the City when it was developed. He was not sure of City Council's involvement with the logo. He inquired whether it was presented to City Council.

Councilwoman Scott replied that she was a member of City Council when the logo was developed; however, nothing was said that it would replace everything in the City.

Councilwoman Woodbury recalled that the logo had something to do with promoting economic development.

Councilwoman Scott agreed that the logo had something to do with promoting economic development.

Councilwoman Woodbury stated she would like to have a City Council discussion about an issue this dramatic, in light of everything that Waterworks owned. She felt a discussion was needed about what the Enterprise System was, when it was set-up, when a logo was proposed, and background information.

Councilman Bateman pointed out that the Enterprise System had been part of the budget since he had been a member of City Council; however, he understood what Councilwoman Woodbury was saying.

Councilwoman Cherry appreciated being able to ask a question. She believed it was alright to ask a question for clarification, and she was open to hearing other opinions as to whether all were in agreement or not. Internal communication needed to continue to be worked on.

City Clerk Mabel Washington Jenkins reminded about the Special Meeting of City Council, for the purpose of holding a one-day Council Retreat for the discussion of the five-year budget forecast, scheduled for Tuesday, January 19, 2016, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., at the Mariner's Museum.

Vice Mayor Coleman reminded about his prior suggestion to have the Work Sessions of City Council televised, in light of the concern that internal communication needed to be improved, as expressed by Councilwoman Cherry. He felt that a lot of important information was discussed at a Work Session that required the City Council to begin discussion in the early afternoon before most people got off work. This would allow an opportunity for people to experience and see what City Council was talking about, rather than just obtaining information by reading the minutes. He asked that City Council brainstorm the issue for discussion at a future City Council Work Session.

Councilwoman Woodbury advised that the suggestion was not new as she had brought the matter up when she first became a member of City Council, but the idea never got off the ground. She indicated that she would certainly support the issue.

Councilwoman Scott stated she made the suggestion 13 years ago and was told that the video of the meeting could not be done due to the configuration of the City Council Conference Room. She was told that City Council would have to have their Work Sessions in the City Council Chambers.

Councilwoman Woodbury stated she was told the same thing. She stated that technology had advanced over the years, and perhaps, the meeting could now be televised in the City Council Conference room.

City Manager Bourey indicated there were two different issues that could be considered: 1) a live broadcast of the meeting; or 2) a video-tape of the meeting. He advised that video-taping the meeting was much easier to do and it would be shown at a later date, as opposed to a live broadcast. He stated staff would investigate both to see which would work better for City Council.

Councilwoman Scott pointed out that no one saw City Council when they actually hashed out matters; they only saw City Council when they voted on an issue at the Regular Meeting. She stated the public believed that there was never any disagreement among City Council. She was in support of televising the Work Session.

Councilwoman Vick stated she was not in support of televising the City Council Work Sessions. She believed that there would be times that members of City Council would become over dramatic when they were televised. She inquired about the reason behind proving that City Council did not sometimes disagree.

Councilwoman Scott inquired whether staff had received any information about the noise complaint at City Center. Assistant City Manager Cynthia Rohlf replied that she and staff looked into the matter and believed the matter had been resolved. They continued to monitor the issue.

Councilwoman Scott stated it was unfortunate that the New Year began with murders. She understood that the Police Department was doing all they could, but she believed that the Chief of Police needed to be out front to address the public when such heinous offenses were committed. It was encouraging for the public to hear from their Chief of Police. There was no reason that the Chief of Police should not be speaking to such issues, by stating that the Police were on top of matters and doing all they could. The public needed to hear from the Chief of Police in order to have a sense of comfort. She wanted to see the Police Department do a better job of communicating with the public when such crimes occurred, and the Chief of Police should be at the forefront.

City Manager Bourey stated that conversations had taken place about the need for the presence of the Chief of Police or his designee. He believed that part of the problem was that the Chief of Police was out of town.

Councilwoman Scott understood, but indicated that the Chief of Police had assistants to cover in his absence. Councilwoman Vick agreed with Councilwoman Scott.

City Manager Bourey stated that long conversations had been held with the Chief of Police about communication. He advised that one of the challenges faced by the Police was 1) an internal investigation might be going on; and 2) situations where the victim(s) of a shooting may be involved in gang activity. There were situations where it would not be wise to discuss criminal activity before obtaining factual information. He understood Councilwoman Scott and indicated that he had been encouraging the Police to offer the public a better picture of what was going on.

Councilwoman Scott suggested that the Chief of Police or his designee talk about the actions taken by the City in relation to a crime and offer empathy to the families of victims of crime. She stated that no one deserved to die. City Manager Bourey stated the Police was very aggressive about

crime and understood the concerns voiced by Councilwoman Scott. He would encourage the Police to provide better communication to the public.

Councilwoman Scott suggested that the Police talk about what they were going to do from a Police and safety standpoint. When someone was killed in one's neighborhood or next to one's residence, they did care what the victim was involved in; their only concern was that they would not be the next victim. City Manager Bourey stated it was an unfortunate domestic violence incident that occurred in the North district at the beginning of the New Year. Unfortunately, there was nothing that the City could have done to stop a domestic incident such as that, with so many guns on the street.

Councilman Bateman asked for an update on the Youth and Gang Violence Initiative. He stated he would like staff to be more proactive and provide a monthly report.

Councilwoman Woodbury agreed with Councilwoman Scott that the Chief of Police needed to be proactive. She stated someone in the community may come forward with information if they were informed at the onset of a crime.

Vice Mayor Coleman pointed out the Police Department's Public Information Officer usually issued a Press Release.

Councilwoman Woodbury agreed, but indicated that many people did not receive e-mail and did not get the information. City Manager Bourey stated that staff needed to send e-mail out to supplement the Press Release.

Councilwoman Woodbury questioned how the City became one of the seven to eight "Welcoming Cities," as reported in a Daily Press newspaper article, when City Council never voted on the matter. She was pro-legal immigration, but, at this point, there were some real concerns and she had received many calls from citizens regarding the designation.

Vice Mayor Coleman stated the reason was that there had been much misinformation passed out in the community.

Councilwoman Woodbury felt that City Council should clarify the matter.

Vice Mayor Coleman disagreed and stated that those reporting the information out should be called out. He stated the information was fear monger.

Councilwoman Woodbury asked whether Vice Mayor Coleman really believed that. She stated that the Cities of Roanoke, Richmond, Newport News, etc., were noted as "Welcoming Cities."

Vice Mayor Coleman advised that the Cities of Roanoke, Richmond and Newport News had always been known as “Welcoming Cities,” as previously discussed.

Councilwoman Woodbury questioned who designated such localities as “Welcoming Cities.”

Vice Mayor Coleman replied that the federal and state government had designated such areas as “Welcoming Cities.” As discussed before, the Catholic Charities had been in the City for more than 40 years operating resettlements and bringing immigrants to the area, without ever facing any kind of issues.

Councilwoman Woodbury pointed out that times were now different.

Vice Mayor Coleman agreed, but stated decisions needed to be based on evidence and facts and not based on comments made by a “blowhard” on the television every night, who needed to deal with facts.

Councilwoman Woodbury agreed that decisions needed to be based on evidence and facts; however, she voiced concern about how the City of Newport News became a “Welcoming City” when no one voted on the matter.

Vice Mayor Coleman stated that Newport News had not become a “Welcoming City”.

Councilwoman Woodbury reiterated that the City had been designated as a “Welcoming City,” and asked how it was done when there had not been a vote to do so. She asked for answers.

Mayor Price shared a PowerPoint presentation by the Mayor’s Youth Commission (attached and made a part of these minutes) noting proposed activities for 2016. He stated several members had asked about the reason that members of City Council did not attend their programs. He wanted to ensure that the members of City Council were aware of their plans for 2016.

Mayor Price advised that the members of the Mayor’s Youth Commission were a great group of youth. He questioned whether the name of the Committee caused the reluctance of City Council to participate or become involved with the group’s activities. If so, he suggested a name change. The name was there when he was elected as Mayor. He believed that City Council should support the Commission, not only physically, but financially. He stated the Commission was a diverse group of youth who represented all the City’s public and private high schools. They had great ideas, energy, and wanted to do something and be appreciated. They were asking for the support of City Council. If there was some reluctance among City Council to participate, because of the name, he suggested a name change.

Councilwoman Scott stated she did not recall being notified about events or programs held by the Mayor's Youth Commission, as she was very supportive of youth. Mayor Price stated that all of the members of City Council received notices.

Councilwoman Cherry stated she had not received any invitations or notices from the Mayor's Youth Commission. She was not aware of the activities that the Mayor's Youth Commission had, and inquired when City Council received information from the Commission. Mayor Price replied that they had annual basketball tournaments that were publicized throughout the entire City.

Councilwoman Vick stated that she had not received any invitations and/or notices from the Mayor's Youth Commission.

Councilwoman Cherry hoped that the Mayor was not assuming that the members of City Council were not supportive of the Mayor's Youth Commission.

Mayor Price stated he was not assuming anything; this was a request by him for City Council to help a talented and appreciative group of youth who were trying to improve the City. He felt they deserved the support of City Council.

The members of City Council were in agreement with Mayor Price to support the Mayor's Youth Commission.

Mayor Price requested that the City Attorney prepare a Resolution of Recognition to the Honorable Mamy E. BaCote, representing the 95th District of the Virginia General Assembly, in honor of her retirement effective December 31, 2015. City Attorney Owens stated that the resolution was underway.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS
ON MOTION, COUNCIL ADJOURNED AT 6:49 P.M.


Jennifer D. Walker, MMC
Chief Deputy City Clerk


McKinley L. Price
Mayor
Presiding Officer

A true copy, teste:

City Clerk